SYDNEY, MELBOURNE & PERTH

travelogue of an Archbishop's 4th Visit to Australia

DR. MAR APREM METROPOLITAN

Thrissur
India

2009

The consecration of Mar Meelis Zaia as Archbishop in Rabban HurmizdCathedral in Sydney on 7th December 2008.
Left to Right. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India, Mar Awa Rouvel Bishop of California, Catholicos Patriarch H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon,Syria & Europe, Mar Meelis Zaia Metropolitan of Australia and New Zealand

Sydney, Melbourne & Perth

The travelogue of an Archbishop's Fourth Visit to Australia

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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

Sydney, Melbourne & Perth

The travelogue of a visit to Sydney, Melbourne and Perth During December 2008

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan

Thrissur
2009

Sydney, Melbourne & Perth

A Travelogue
(English)

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FOREWORD

His Eminence Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of the COE in India does not require any introduction to a voracious bookworm because of the quantum of books on copious subjects that have been published by him so far. Being a frequent globe trotter and exceedingly well informed on almost any subject under the sun the eminent Dr. Mar Aprem has mastered the art of putting views and beliefs into expressions. Over 68 books on numerous topics have been penned and published by His Eminence displaying a talent par excellence. He also tends to bring joy and laughter to the World with several books of jokes that have been published so far. The highly proficient Dr. Mar Aprem has been recipient of innumerable awards for his cultural and ecumenical experience, as well as an assortment of community welfare activities. As a well revered personage he has been instrumental in the founding and operation of more than half a dozen institutions. He has established time and again by his modesty that he is the true leader of the Church of the East in India bested by none.

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan who was consecrated as Bishop at the age of 28 and promoted immediately as Metropolitan has completed over four decades of enlightening the congregation. He has revealed his mettle as a linguist and poet, exposed his dexterity as a journalist, satirist and an orator.

The 69th book written by Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan is a concise narration of his experiences during his fourth sojourn to the world reputed cities of Sydney, Melbourne & Perth in Australia. The book is elegantly authored in precise simple English for the benefit of a reader with a basic knowledge of the language. The sequence of events leads one back and forth from the present to the past. A brief history of the origin of the Assyrian community and their spread through out the globe serves one in gaining additional awareness. By this book he continues to express gratitude to a lot of kind and helpful people he has met during any of his whirlwind tours. Clergy and Laymen alike go out of their way to serve the kind hearted Dr. Mar Aprem. He cherishes fond memories of people he has had the opportunity of meeting even on a single occasion. A liberal sprinkle of humor adds spice to the narrative prompting the reader to plough through to the finish. A book so authored can be compared to pearls of knowledge and enlightenment.

This book can also be termed as a basic reference book particularly to an Indian traveler who is embarking on a maiden expedition to the Great Outback. It also encompasses in brief the historic origin, culture and customs of these cities. The book relates the account of the aborigines and their orientation into the modern society of Australia. It glides through the calamities and financial debacle these cities have gone through in its metamorphosis as some of the greatest cities in the World. The informational content of the book is brusque and knowledgeable.

During an era when a multitude of Indian youth seek out dreams of high quality living conditions, promising career options and the urge to acquire wealth, this book would serve as a guide to lands across distant shores. Interspersed with references of meetings with eminent and distinguished personalities from all walks of life adds to fascinating reading. Additionally the book gives the reader an idea about the time involved in traveling between the two continents and the shortest route to be chosen. Even the hub city of Singapore is skimmed through in the pages proving to be an efficient travel guide. The cover page of the book has been artistically done up to give credence to this fact.

The book also serves to keep one grounded with The Almighty and prompts mankind not to abandon humility and simplicity in their pursuance of the golden pot at the end of the rainbow. It tends to illuminate that the recipient of benevolence would always be closely anchored to the conviction of an existence of The Almighty. I humbly beg and pray that may the perpetual light keep shining on His Eminence Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan and may he continue the good deed of edifying mankind in the glory of The Almighty.

P. C. Chacko

Detailed Outline

Introduction

Purpose of going to Australia. Pullout of Tennis Australia from Chennai on May 8 – 10, 2009. Tennis cannot be equated with cricket in India. "It's easier to fill a page than a stage", Gitangali Kolanad. Fire in Australia. Assyrian Church of the East faithful raise over $10,000 for Victorian bushfire victims. Job discrimination against minorities in Oz: study. Attacks on Indians in Australia slammed. SC: Safety of students in Australia paramount. Australian delegation to visit India. Minister Vayalar Ravi, P.C.Chacko M.P., Fr. Michael Vallavanthara, Johnson T. John. Joseph Haweil.

Chapter 1

Fourth Visit to Sydney.

Arrival in Sydney on 5 December 2008. Michael Lee & family, Rowena & family, Fr.Geevarghese Atto with deacon at the airport. Stay in the residence of Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia. On 6th December we all went to see the construction of the houses for the elderly in the Polding street. A newspaper report about the progress of the housing scheme. Fairfield City 2009 Citizen of the Year.

Details about Sydney. Largest city in Australia established in 1788. Port Jackson, Sydney Harbour. Ranked 16th among global cities. 2000 summer Olympics and 2003 Rugby World Cup. 15th among the most expensive cities of the world.

Visit to the house of Ramsina & Michael Lee. Visit to the house of William Talya. Philemon Darmo.

The consecration of bishop Mar Meelis Zaia as Metropolitan on Sunday December 7, 2008. Thousands of Church members and visitors. Prof. Dr. Rafaat Ebied. Sister Jincy Othottil's Ph.D.thesis.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian School Anniversary.

The Anthem of the Church **At-ta D Ee-ty.** The lyrics in Assyrian in English transliteration and translation. Rabbi Shoura Michalian. Visit to his home. Playing the Indian national anthem on his accordion. Lyric of *Jana Gana Mana* in full. Report of Holy Qurbana by Sheena Sarkhosh.

Meeting Engineer Joffin Jos from India.

Foundation of St. Peter & St. Paul Church in Sydney. Parish priest Rev. Genard Lazar. Fund raising Charity Bazaar on 22 and 23 August 2009.

Assyrian visitors to meet the Catholicos Patriarch.

Mar Narsai Metropolitan. Assyrian Doctor. B.P. Automatic Blood Pressure Monitor SEM-2. OMRON STEPS Pedometer HJ 005. 10,000 steps a day keeps one fit.

Kerala Friends. Visit to the house of Dr. Kollannur Ittimani and son-in-law Jaison. Dr. Verghese Kurien, Dr. K.C.Abraham.

The early colony. Gold rush. First city council on 20 July 1642. Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932. 19th & early 20th century. Second World War. European and Asian immigrants began to settle down in Sydney. Topography. Pacific ocean to the East. Blue Mountain to the West.

Climate is temperate with warm summers and cool winters. Rain can be expected throughout the year. The highest temperature was 45.3.c (113.5. F). The lowest was 2.1.c (35.8 F). Coldest month is July. The snowfall last reported in Sydney was in 1836. Bondi Beach is popular.

City not affected by cyclones. Prone to windstorm and hailstorm 1999 damaged city and suburbs causing an immense loss of 1.7 billion Australian Dollars in five hours.

Flash flooding is another calamity. On 6 August 1986 caused 327.6 Millimeter (12.9 inches) in the city in 24 hours. The summer of 2007 – 08 proved to be one of the coolest on record.

Chapter 2

Third Visit to Melbourne

Joseph Haweil's house. Second biggest city. Queen Victoria declared it a city in 1847. One of the wealthiest cities in the world. It is the capital of Victoria State. Yarra River. Became separate colony from New South Wales in 1851. In 1901 when Commonwealth of Australia was founded Melbourne became capital until 1927 when the present capital Canberra was built. Melbourne is Australia's cultural and sporting capital. In 2008 Melbourne was classified as a City of Literature by UNESCO.

Early history and foundation. The first European settlement in Victoria was in 1803 on Sullivan Bay but was abandoned. In 1835 Central and Northern Melbourne was explored. It was called Melbourne after the British Prime Minister William Lamb who resided in the village of Melbourne in Derbyshire in England. Victorian gold rush helped the rapid growth of Melbourne as a major port. Migration from abroad including Ireland and China caused population increases. Construction of Parliament House, Treasury Building, State Library, Supreme Court, University, St. Paul's Cathedral, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Town Hall etc. Stock exchange in 1861.

At the time of white settlers, the indigenous people numbered 15,000 and fell to 800 and 80% decrease by 1863 due to diseases like Small Pox. The Land turned into Boom and Bust. In 1880s Melbourne's boom was peaking. Melbourne became the second largest city in the British Empire after London. Most affluent in the world.

During 1885 English Journalist George Sala coined the phrase "Marvelous Melbourne". Palatial mansions proliferated in the city. In 1887 hydraulic facility paved the way for elevators which changed the city's skyline. Expanded rail based transport network. In 1891 depression hit city's economy causing collapse of 16 small banks

and 133 limited companies were liquidated. Melbourne's financial crisis helped trigger Australian economic depression in 1890s and Australian banking crisis in 1893.

Federation of Australia Melbourne and the Yarra in 1928. On 1st January 1901 Melbourne became temporary seat of government. The first federal Parliament was convened on 9 May 1901 in Royal Exhibition building and continued there till 1927 when it moved to Canberra. Governor General remained at Government House until 1930. The railway station became the busiest in the world in 1927. In 1940 Melbourne's train network became the world's largest. During World War II Melbourne became Australia's leading manufacturing centre.

Post war period. This period hosted Olympic Games in 1956. Pre-war tall buildings were demolished, despite the efforts of the National Trust of Victoria and Save Collins Street movement. Larger suburban mansions were demolished or subdivided. Modernization took place. 1969 Melbourne Transportation changed the city into an automobile dominated environment. Melbourne remained financial capital till 1970s when Sydney got primacy. By 1992 some financial collapse in Melbourne happened. But Kennett coalition government tried to revive economy by sports tourism etc. Major projects included the Melbourne Museum, Federation Square, the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, Crown Casino and City Link toll-way. Other strategies included privatization of power and public transport.

Since 1997 Melbourne made significant growth in population and employment. Major remarks were Southbank, Port Melbourne, Melbourne Docklands, and recently south Wharf. 2000 July Seminar. Bishop Suriel. Visited two Indian couples. Soman Chackola and Sheela. My niece Mrs. Honey Gray and her son Paul. Tried to play guitar and learn cricket. Rev. Hurmizd Gewargis a Chaldean priest joins our Church. Kerala Catholic priest joining Pentecostal church. Report of Joseph Haweil about my Holy Qurbana in Melbourne. Deacon Antawan was escort for me most of the time.

Chapter 3

Visit to Perth

Perth was founded on 12 June 1829 by Captain James Stirling, Australian Governor. Perth became known worldwide as the "City of Lights". Perth is the fourth largest city in Australia after Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. It is the only big city in Western Australia.

About abmusic. About noongar media enterprises. The city. Iyunny David and family. Josy Williams. Swan Bell. Episcopal Church. Engineer Kuruvilla Mathew. Playing Malayalam devotional songs and Silent Night Holy Night on piano.

Chapter 4

Return via Singapore

Departure from Perth International Airport. Declaring the Australian currency. Kind officer at the immigration. Reached Singapore in the same evening. In 2007 Singapore airlines received 19 best airline awards. It used to get awards for the best meal even in cheapest class. History of the Singapore airport. Interesting accidents and incidents. Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells.

Reached safe 23rd itself in Cochin airport. A friendly officer at the customs. After midnight I reached Trichur by car, with in just one hour and ten minutes.

APPENDIX

Website on the Church of the East in Australia and New Zealand.

POSTSCRIPT

Difficulties in travel. Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, film star Sharuk Khan. Security risk. Difficulties in travel with beard and brown skin. Fifty six foreign trips. Many airlines.

INTRODUCTION

In November 2008 after my return to India after a seven-week-long trip to Dubai, USA and Kurdistan I decided not to plan a trip in the near future. I wished to write my travelogue and publish it without delay. But I was invited to Australia for the promotion of Mar Meelis Zaia as Archbishop of Australia and New Zealand.

Thus I postponed writing the travelogue. Instead I started preparation to get a visa to Australia. To my surprise the Australian Consulate in New Delhi granted me a visa for one year; multiple entries.

Recently Indian newspapers began to be critical about the affairs of the Australian government. A small example is given below.

Australia's double fault

If anything, Tennis Australia provided the finest example of a 'kangaroo statement' while justifying its pullout of the Davis Cup tie against India that was scheduled for May 8-10 in Chennai. The reasoning (perceived security threat to its players) is without logic and an outright disregard for assurance of safety from no less an authority than the Union home minister. Apparently, TA is totally misinformed of the prevailing situation in Chennai and it has overstepped its brief and authority in referring to the country as a whole. To offer lame excuses such as the train hijack in UP and the shifting of the IPL to South Africa besides the general elections in our country only reflects TA's misplaced suspicions, half-baked information and utter ignorance of India.

TA has conveniently glossed over England's cricket tour of India within a fortnight of the 26/11 attacks and the ATP Chennai Open in January this year. IPL would have stretched the security personnel thin during the election period, as the tournament involved high-profile cricketers, travel and huge number of spectators at each venue. A Davis Cup tie entails a six-day stay in one city for a squad of about

10, including three days of competition watched by 3,000 spectators. TA needs to be told that tennis players, by no stretch of imagination can be equated with the cricketers in celebrity status in the sub-continent. A Hewitt or a Fitzgerald would attract as much attention on a Chennai street as kangaroo in the Australian outback.

"It's easier to fill a page than a stage", writes Gitangali Kolanad, a Toronto based dancer, choreographer and writer in **New Indian Express**, Kochi dated 18 July 2009. Defending her claim that it is easier to write than to dance she is preparing a list of 10 reasons why it's better to be a writer than a dancer. She writes:

1. Writers can lie down and work.

2. Not actually writing is still writing, while not dancing is just not dancing.

3. "No pain" needs no corollary, and is considered to be a good thing.

I can imagine when she completes the 10 reasons; all the dancers will be convinced. But I am not sure if the writers will be. If it is a good book it needs a lot of pain for research and re-writing. Anyhow, since I am not a dancer I cannot compare writing and dancing and pronounce my own verdict.

FIRE IN AUSTRALIA

Australia is in mourning over the growing number of dead because of the worst ever bushfires in Australian history and worst death toll in a single event on Australian soil since the world war.

- 150 dead at 5.25 pm, authorities predict more than 300 killed.
- 400 fires are burning around Victoria, NSW and South Australia.
- close to 1000 homes and business have been destroyed.
- tourist towns and villages are wiped of the map.

- mothers and fathers have witnessed their young children burn alive while they helplessly stood as their homes blew up in flames.
- dozens of families found burnt to death in their cars trying to flee areas, but the fires eventually caught up with them.

Let's all remember our fellow Australians tonight in our prayers and remember those who perished, the women, men and children. Let's also pray for our heroes our firefighters and ten thousands of volunteers fighting these fires and rescuing people as we sit at our safe homes.

God Bless!

Assyrian Church of the East raises over $10,000 for Victorian Bushfire victims

The faithful of the Assyrian Church of the East have responded to the call to help those in need.

During recent church services His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia AM made an appeal to all the church faithful to respond to the devastation of the Victorian people. He announced that at this time of great national disaster, a Christian's duty is to help those in need, and the very least we can do is give financially to those whose lives have been destroyed so quickly and fiercely.

As Christians our compassion drives us to act on behalf of the vulnerable and right now the suffering of the people of Victoria needs our immediate response. The funds will be forwarded to the Australian Red Cross.

The news from The New Indian Express dated Friday, June 19, 2009, Kochi Job discrimination against minorities in Oz: study

Sydney: Job seekers in Australia face a tougher time finding work if they have non-English sounding names, with Chinese and Middle Eastern applicants facing the worst discrimination, a study has found.

Researchers from Canberra's Australian National University (ANU) sent out 4,000 fake job applications in response to employment advertisements in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane using ethnically distinct names. They found Chinese applicants needed to send 68 percent more CVs than those with English names to get the same number of interviews, with Middle Eastern job-seekers requiring an additional 64 percent and Aborigines 35 percent.

The news from Sathyadeepam dated 2009 June.

Attacks on Indians in Australia slammed

Church groups in India have expressed concern over increasing incidents of attacks on their compatriots in Australia. About 10 students from India were attacked in the past few weeks in Australia in what media called "curry – bashing." The attacks prompted widespread protests in India. Most of the attacks occurred in Melbourne.

Reverend Enos Pradhan, general secretary of the Church of North India, has called the attacks "sad," saying that "we condemn them." He also said his Church plans to discuss the matter with its counterpart, the Uniting Church in Australia, to press its government to protect foreign students.

Fr. Alwyan D'Souza, secretary of the Indian bishops' youth commission, said that the Church sympathizes with the victims and expects that the Australian government will take steps to stop such incidents. According to media reports, about 97,000 Indians presently study in Australia.

Father Babu Joseph, spokeperson of the Catholic bishops' conference, also condemned the attack. He said the Indian bishops have already written to the Australian High Commission in India to urge its government to protect Indians, especially students who have gone there to get "quality education."

- RACIAL ATTACKS

SC: Safety of students in Australia paramount

The Supreme Court on Monday expressed concern over unabated attacks on Indian students in Australia and directed the government to file a comprehensive affidavit within two weeks about steps taken by it to ensure their safety.

"The safety and security of Indian students in Australia is paramount," a Bench comprising Justice Dalveer Bhandari and Justice A K Ganguli said.

"We are sure that the government will take all steps but our anxiety is that despite the best of efforts on the part of the government, the incidents of attacks are going on," the Bench observed.

The court's observation came when Attorney General G E Vahanvati apprised the Bench about the steps already taken by the Centre. He said all attacks on Indian students in Australia couldn't be termed as racial.

Directing the Centre to file its report within two weeks, the Bench asked the government to place all information on the website as anxious parents, relatives and friends of the Indian students in Australia are entitled to know the exact situation in the country.

The apex court said the contents of the affidavit and the guidelines should be placed on the websites of the Ministries of External Affairs and Overseas Indians, and the Indian High Commission in Australia so that parents and relatives are aware of the exact situation prevailing there.

Earlier, responding to a notice issued by the court on a PIL alleging inaction on the part of the government in dealing with the attacks, the Centre said that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh himself took up the matter with his Australian counterpart Kevin Rudd on May 29.

It also informed the court that the Australian Government was exploring the possibility of amending its existing laws to enhance punishment for racism-related offences.

Australian delegation to visit India

With possibility of a drop in the number of Indian students to Australia in the wake of racial attacks, a delegation of top officials and academicians is coming here next month to promote Australia as a safe destination.

The delegation, comprising vice chancellors of prominent Australian universities, will also explain the steps taken by their Government to stop attacks on the migrants.

"An Australian delegation is coming here to explain to us about the measures they have taken to ensure safety and security of the Indian students," Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi said.

Apart from meeting government officials in New Delhi, the high-level delegation will also visit various states such as Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala, to apprise them of the steps taken by the Australian authorities to contain attacks, the Minister said.

Asked about the attacks on Indian students, Vayalar Ravi said although in the incidents, have not been completely controlled, they have come down. He said the situation in Australia is under control apart from a few stray incidents.

Asked why the incidents are still continuing despite of assurances, he said, police negligence is the reason for increase in the attacks.

I am grateful to Mr. P.C. Chacko, Member of the Lok Sabha (Parliament) from Trichur who wrote an excellent Foreword to this travelogue. He has embarked upon a brave and vigorous road map to improve the roads, the railway stations, drinking water and such infrastructure in his constituency. His enthusiasm is unique. Friends and foes look at his enthusiasm with admiration. His second term in

the Lok Sabha representing Trichur constituency is going to be recorded in his political career as a bright and shining one indeed. He is not only an orator who is omnipresent in Trichur, but an able conductor in the parliamentary procedures in the Lok Sabbha in New Delhi.

My gratitude goes to Fr. Michael Vallavanthara M.A., Manager of the Mar Narsai Press, Trichur who took extra care to minimize the number of printing errors so common in small publishing houses which cannot afford to employ proof readers. Johnson T. John who is designing the cover pages of my books deserves my thanks profusely. Joseph Haweil, my young friend in Melbourne, deserves my thanks for reading through the Manuscript of this book and making some suggestions.

Trichur 680001, Kerala
15 October 2009

Mar Aprem

Chapter 1

Fourth Visit to Sydney

My flight landed at Sydney's Kingsford Smith International Airport on Thursday 5th December 2008. Michael Lee and his wife Ramsina with their two daughters were there with flowers. Ramsina's sister, Mrs. Rowena Daniali too was there with her two darling daughters. Rev. Gewargis Atto, the parish priest of St. Mary's Assyrian Church in Polding Street, Fairfield, was there with a deacon to receive me officially on behalf of the Church.

After receiving too many flowers from Ramsina and Rowena we stood in the airport and talked for a few minutes. Michael Lee, an expert photographer, took too many photos. The Lee family drove me in their car to the Episcopal Residence of Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia in Cecil Hills where all the bishops were to stay along with the Catholicos Patriarch His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.

In June 2000 I had stayed in that house during Symposium Syriacum. Bishop Mar Meelis was there with a smiling face to receive me. This time I was given the only bedroom on the ground floor. This helped me to go to the meals in the kitchen or in the dining room without climbing the staircase. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, our Catholicos Patriarch had arrived from Chicago, USA and had gone upstairs. But I met the other prelates Mar Narsai Metropolitan from Beirut, Lebanon and Bishop Mar Awa Royel from California. After a brief conversation we retired to our rooms.

On Friday 6th December, Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV accompanied by Mar Narsai Metropolitan, Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia, Mar Awa Royel, Cor episcopa Ashur Lazar, Rev. Gewargis Atto and myself went to see the construction of the housing for the elderly in the land next to St. Mary's Church in Polding Street. We were

happy to see that the construction of 58 houses was progressing. The committee members told us that the construction will be completed in March 2010. Now as I write this chapter on 9 April 2009 I see on the internet a news item on this construction in the Fairfield City **Champion** newspaper. It tells the progress the construction is making. It seems that it will be completed in 2009 itself.

> BY STACEY VANOSKA
> 8/04/2009 4:00:00 AM
>
> AFFORDABLE rental apartments are being built in Fairfield as part of a national scheme that will offer new accommodation for low- and middle-income families.
>
> The 58 properties, now under construction in Polding Street, are to be built and managed by an association between Churches Community Housing and the Assyrian Church of the East that shares the site.
>
> Archbishop Mar Meelis Zaia said the Assyrian Church had already started construction of the homes before they found out about the Federal Government scheme.
>
> "The Churches Community Housing informed us of the scheme and as we were one of the first to apply, we were also one of the first to be approved," he said.
>
> We are hoping to eventually build and manage about 300 affordable rental apartments in the area," he said.
>
> Assistant Treasurer and Prospect MP Chris Bowen said the new affordable homes will have an enormous effect in Fairfield.
>
> "In the past Australian households would have rented as a stepping stone to buying their own home, but they are now finding it much tougher to do that.

"This policy will ensure that affordable rental accommodation exists for residents in Fairfield," he said.

The National Rental Affordability Scheme aims to improve affordability in the private rental sector by requiring that the rent charged be at least 20percent below the market rate.

Archbishop Zaia said that due to the shortage of affordable accommodation in the area, there is already a waiting list of more than 120 people.

"The people on the waiting list are mainly elderly residents that can not afford to rent privately anymore because they are on the age pension," he said.

"As long as they meet all the eligibility requirements, they will be the first to be housed in the properties."

Archbishop Zaia said the Polding Street properties were expected to be completed in November this year and the Church had already started the ball rolling for more affordable properties under the scheme in Fairfield and Greenfield Park.

Fairfield City 2009 Citizen of the Year

In December when I was staying with His Beatitude Mar Meelis a reporter came with a cameraman to take pictures of the Archbishop to prepare an advance report regarding the citizen of the year award he has to receive on January 26, 2009.

H B Mar Meelis Zaia A.M. at a big reception held by the City of Fairfield Council will be presented with an award for Fairfield City 2009 Citizen of the Year on Australia Day, 26 January 2009. According to the committee electing citizen of the year, H.G. Mar Meelis, is viewed by the Assyrians here to be one of the pioneers of the Assyrian Church in this country. He was decorated last year with an Order of Australia (A.M. Medal) by the Queen of England for meritorious achievements for the people in Australia.

Sydney (pronounced sjdni] is the largest city in Australia, with a metropolitan area population of approximately 4.34 million (2008 estimate). It is the state capital of New South Wales (N.S.W.), and was the site of the first British colony in Australia. Situated on an inlet of the Tasman Sea, Sydney is built on low hills surrounding Port Jackson. It was established in 1788 at Sydney Cove by Arthur Phillip, admiral of the First Fleet from Britain. A resident of the city is referred to colloquially as a Sydneysider.

Sydney is situated on Australia's south-east coast. The city is built around Port Jackson, which includes Sydney Harbour, leading to the city's nickname, "the Harbour City". The city is home to the iconic Sydney Opera House, Harbour Bridge and its beaches. The metropolitan area is surrounded by national parks, and contains many bays, rivers and inlets. Sydney is considered an alpha+ world city, listed by the Loughborough University group's 2008 inventory and ranked 16th among global cities by *Foreign Policy*'s 2008 Global Cities Index. The city has hosted international sporting events, including the 1938 British Empire Games, 2000 Summer Olympics and the final of the 2003 Rugby World Cup. The main airport serving Sydney is Kingsford Smith International Airport, commonly referred to as Sydney Airport.

Sydney is one of the most multicultural cities in the world, which reflects its role as a major destination for immigrants to Australia. According to the Mercer cost of living survey, Sydney is Australia's most expensive city, and the 15th most expensive in the world. Sydney also ranks among the top 10 most livable cities in the world according to Mercer Human Resource Consulting and *The Economist*.

The consecration was the main event of the visit of His Holiness the Catholicos Patriarch to Sydney. In this journey from America His Holiness was accompanied by the newly consecrated bishop of California USA, namely Mar Awa Royel. His name was David Royel. At his consecration on 30th November at Modesto, California he took the Episcopal name of Mar Awa.

During the consecration day on December 7, the first Sunday of Advent (*Subara*), the faithful crowded into the St. Hurmizd Cathedral from early morning. Before the prelates arrived in the Cathedral, the clergy under the leadership of Cor episcopa Lazar, the vicar of the Cathedral, were all dressed up. Then we moved as a procession from the western side of the Cathedral towards east to the Holy Altar. Archdeacon Yonan Y. Yonan of London, England was also there. There is no archdeacon in Australia after the death of Archdeacon Kiwarkis Younan on 8 July 2007. The two Metropolitans of Lebanon and India were there. The Metropolitan of Iraq, Mar Gewargis Sliwa arrived only 2 days after the consecration owing to the delay of getting Australian visa in Baghdad, Iraq.

A senior professor from the University of Sydney was present in the centre of the front row in the church. That was Professor Rafaat Ebied whom I had met in 1989 as well as in June 2000. It was interesting to see him in the church, especially because he belongs to the Coptic Orthodox Church which holds a grudge against our Church, because we refuse to condemn Nestorius of Constantinople on the issue of Theotokos, the Greek word meaning the Bearer of God. Nestorius preferred Christotokos meaning the bearer of Christ. Those who are interested to know more about this Christological controversy can read my M.Th. degree thesis, '**The Council of Ephesus of 431 A.D**'. Unfortunately this book is out of print. An Arabic translation of this book was available some years ago, but perhaps not now.

Professor Ebied had taught in England for several years before he settled in Sydney. He is the Head of the Department of Semitic Studies in the University of Sydney. Arabic is his mother tongue. Coptic is language of the liturgy. Hebrew, Syriac and so on were the other languages he learned.

Peter of Callinicum is Syrian Orthodox. But that Church is in communion with his Coptic Church, being a non-Chalcedonian Church

ike the Ethiopian Church and the Armenian Church. Non-Chalcedonian Church means a Church which accepts the first three ecumenical Councils of Nicea (325 A.D.) Constantinople (381 A.D.) and Ephesus (431 A.D.) but refuses to recognize the fourth council held at Chalcedon (451 A.D.).

The Professor's hospitality in his house at Sylvania Waters in the seashore in 1989 is still green in my memory. I ate the ripe fruits from the Guava tree in his garden. I could not spend much time as I knew that my hosts would be restless if we were late for the 5 p.m. visit to the Assyrian School. We said goodbye to Emeer, the only son of the Professor, who had started his university education. I now hear that he is a medical doctor. Professor and Mrs. Ebied took me to the Assyrian School, (old calendar) and spent some time with me as the children sang songs of welcome to me and posed for the photograph.

Now I hear that Professor Ebied has retired from the University of Sydney in April 2009. Sister Jincy Othottil, the first nun from our Church in India in recent history, had the privilege of guidance from him for her Ph.D. thesis which she has submitted to SEERI in September 2009 for the consideration of Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam.

She was able to spend some weeks in Sydney through the financial support of Mar Meelis Zaia Metropolitan of Sydney. As a matter of fact Mar Meelis Metropolitan had given financial help to Sister Jincy to study for two years for M.A. degree and another four years for Ph.D., also in the same university in Kottayam. It was during the visit of Professor Ebied to attend the World Syriac Conference in SEERI in Kottayam, in 2006 that Sister Jincy was able to talk to him requesting his guidance in the final stages of her dissertation on the devotion to St. Mary in the liturgical prayers of the Assyrian Church of the East.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School

The school started functioning in 2000 in Sydney. Since its inception it has grown considerably. The government grant also became available in recent years. No doubt it is one of the major contributions of Metropolitan Mar Meelis Zaia for the progress of Fairfield area as the Assyrian community.

The building of the third stage began in March 2005 and was completed by November 2005. Two classes for year 4, one class for year 5, one class for year 6 and two classes for year 7.

The board has also restructured their plans for 2006 in order to accommodate the high demand for school enrolments. The existing classrooms will be used to provide for four classes for Kindergarten, three classes for year 1, two classes for year 2 and two classes for year 3.

The three-storey building will comprise of six classrooms, a canteen and a cleaner's storeroom. As the school board plans to take on a larger number of students in 2006, the completion of the building will be met with great relief for the school principal and the families wanting to enroll their children.

Once the third stage of the primary school is completed, the school board will shift its focus to the Mar Narsai College project. God willing, the Mar Narsai College was planned to open its doors for students in the 2007 school year.

In December 2008 we had the school day celebration in a grand manner. In addition to His Holiness the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV who presided over the function. Metropolitan Mar Narsai de Baz of Lebanon, myself, Metropolitan Mar Gewargis Sliwa of Iraq, Bishop Mar Awa Royel of California and Archdeacon Youel Y. Yonan and others distributed the class prizes for the students of class 9 or so. The Principal and the Vice Principal spoke. I was attracted by the choir and the anthem.

The Anthem of the Church

At the Assyrian School anniversary function I heard the anthem of the Church sung in the Assyrian language. This is the first time I knew that there is an anthem called Church Anthem. I have heard the National Anthem of India as well as that of America. Our Church anthem begins with the words At-ta D'Ee-ty.

I was inspired to translate it into Malayalam direct from the Assyrian. Then I realize that it would be easier for me to translate the anthem if an English translation is available. Rev. Genard Lazar promised to send it to me. I was happy when he e-mailed to me in January itself the text of the anthem in Assyrian script, transliteration and translation in English. I was happy to translate it into my mother tongue Malayalam.

At-ta D'Ee-ty

At-ta D'Ee-ty, At-ta D'Ee-ty,
He-vee d'kh-ayee o'hay-man-otee.
Pris-lon nee-shakh, a-wa-ha-tee,
B'khaq-rin l'shi-makh, l'da-na d'mo-tee.

Rim-za d'ee-tan, ya mqo-dish-ta,
Hay-man-ta b'ee-dan m'so-pee-ta.
Dwikh-lon kha-ye, sah-de d'ee-ta
Hal a-bad, pay-shat mo-ri-mta.

Dshee-le khish-ka, o'zri-qle bah-ra,
B'da-na d'rim-la, at-ta d'shra-ra.
Mar-ya wee-le, qa-to ma-ra,
Bit rup-rip-pa, m'da-ra l'da-ra.

O flag of my Church

O flag of my Church, O flag of my Church
The hope of my life and faith
My fathers spread your aim
I will honour your name till the day of my death.

The symbol of our Church, O sanctified one
A faith committed into our hands,
The martyrs of the Church sacrificed their lives
That you may be raised eternally.

The darkness was hidden and the light was raised
At the moment the flag of truth was raised.
The Lord became her Lord,
It will soar from generation to generations

Rabbi Shoora Michalian is the best musician in our Church universally. During my third visit to Sydney which was in June 2000 to attend the Symposium Syriacum we had a meeting in Edessa Hall. Rabbi Shoora Michalian arranged his choir to sing my song 'Behold the Cross of Calvary' in English translation. It was originally composed in Aramaic and translated to 100 languages by the help of my many friends around the planet earth.

I had started my friendship with Rabbi Shoora Michalian at the **Mesopotamia Light** Seminar in 1994 in California when the Assyrian choir sang. The well known Assyrian singer Linda George sang in the choir on that occasion. Rabbi Shoora Michalian was born in Russia and was teaching violin in California in those days. He had put musical notations to many of our liturgical hymns. Later he moved with his wife to Sydney, Australia. He is teaching many Assyrians violin and other musical instruments.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV told me that he was going to pay a short visit to the house of Rabbi Shoora. I was very happy to accompany His Holiness and other prelates. During the short visit Rabbi Shouora played his violin as well as his accordion. He began to play in his accordion the National Anthem of India. My mouth automatically opened and I sang melodiously and hilariously:

Jana Gana Mana Athi nayaka Jaya he Bharatha Bagya vithatha,
Punjab Sindhu Gujarat Marata Dravida Uthkala Benga
Vindya Himachala Yamuna Ganga Ujjwala Jalathitha Ranga,
Tavasubha name gahe thavasubha asisha mage, Gahe thava jaya Gatha.
Janagana Mangala Dayaka Jayahe, Bharatha Bagyavithatha,
Jaya he, Jaya he, Jaya he, Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya he.

I sang our national anthem. Then he played some piece of western music thinking that I knew it. I expressed my ignorance of that tune. He said it was Schubert. I have heard the name of Schubert, the German composer. But my knowledge of his music is next to nothing. Rabbi Shoora is an asset of our Assyrian Church.

A brief comment about my holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam Assyrian Church on Sunday in Fairfield in Sydney was reported by a young Assyrian lady named Sheena Sarkhosh from Sydney. She may become a good writer in future. Her report is quoted below.

His Beatitude Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of the COE in India celebrates the Holy Qurbana in St. Mary's Church, Sydney,

By: Sheena Sarkhosh, Sydney

Sunday 14th of December marked the third week of the Subara.(Annunciation). The Assyrian faithful who attended St Mary's

Church in Fairfield, a suburb of Sydney, Australia were blessed with the presence of His Beatitude Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of the Church of the East in India.

His sermon focused on a gospel reading from Luke 1: 26-57. The sermon appropriately focused on the message of the Advent season. His Beatitude's sermon also explored the necessity to create a new Christian path for all individuals, focused on forgiveness, love for one another, prayer and humility. Following the sermon the faithful received the prayer of absolution and proceeded to take the Holy Qurbana.

The Eucharistic Liturgy was followed by the faithful taking part in fellowship which was prepared by the Woman's Auxiliary Committee. His Grace also engaged in conversations with the faithful, one that was most interesting reflected a faithful His Grace had baptized in one of his visits in the year 1989.

The presence of His Beatitude was most certainly a blessing. Although only visiting for a short period, the beloved Metropolitan of India made a deep and lasting impression on the faithful who were able to learn more about our Church in India and His Beatitude's expansive knowledge of the Church of the East and her history.

During my holy Qurbana on Sunday 14 December 2008 I was to meet an Indian Engineer Joffin Jos Kollannur from Trichur. Several years ago he had difficulty in getting admission in St. Thomas College, Trichur in the Pre-Degree course. Every year the Syro Malabar Catholic Church used to give me one seat from the Management Quota for a student I recommend. So I obtained a seat for him. When four or five students come and request for the recommendation letter it was a headache in choosing one and discarding the rest. I was happy to see Joffin Jos Kollannur in Sydney. So after holy Qurbana I took a photo with him which is printed in this book.

I was also happy to meet an Assyrian lady who told me that I had baptized her son in that church in April 1989. Then he showed me the baby, now a young man of 20 years.

After meeting a few Assyrians I went to the house of William Talya for breakfast and some hours later lunch. He is an old Assyrian from the tribe of Nochea. He is one of the earliest members of our Church in Australia, His daughter and grand daughter had visited me in India about a year ago. There were other Assyrians in that home. One was Philemon Darmo with whom I was in correspondence for many years.

Foundation for Ss. Peter & Paul Church in Sydney

On Sunday the 14th December 2008, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch, accompanied by Church Prelates from various Dioceses, laid the Foundation Stone for the Ss. Peter and Paul Parish Church. This historical event was conducted on the land located at Kosovich Place in Cecil Park (Western Suburbs of Sydney, approx. 10 minutes drive from St. Hurmizd Cathedral). The event was attended by almost 1000 people on a windy yet glorious day.

Upon arrival at the land, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV and the Prelates were greeted by the Deacons and Choir group with the prayer of welcoming of the Fathers "Slootakh Awoon".

Deacon Emmanuel Yousip hosted the afternoon, with speeches by His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia and Reverend Genard Lazar, Parish Priest. His Holiness began the liturgical prayer service and upon conclusion spoke to the audience, expressing the significance of evangelization in various languages in order to draw souls to Christ and salvation as did our early Church Fathers.

The official laying of the stone was carried out by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Metropolitans Mar Narsai de Baz, Mar Aprem Mooken, Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Mar Meelis Zaia, Bishop Mar Awa Royel, Archdeacon Yonan Y. Yonan from England and Parish Priests. A steel cylinder containing historical information written in the Aramaic

language was blessed and placed within the stone and cemented by the Prelates.

Afterwards there were celebrations with Assyrian dancing as members of the community expressed their joy at what was a truly memorable experience.

The St. Peter and Paul Parish is a special part of the Assyrian Church of the East and its community in Sydney Australia. This parish, lead by Reverend Genard Lazar is known to have changed many people's lives since its establishment and brought them closer to Christ

Charity bazaar held by Ss Peter and Paul Parish

The Ss. Peter & Paul Parish - Assyrian Church of the East of Australia, held its first ever charity fund raising bazaar on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd of August 2009 at the Assyrian Australian Social Centre.

During the 2 days, merchandise which was donated by the Church faithful was sold at a charitable price in anticipation of raising funds for the building of the proposed Ss. Peter & Paul Parish Church premises in Cecil Park.

Stalls were hired out by individuals who were granted the opportunity to present and sell their goods.

The expertise of the Ss. Peter and Paul Parish hospitality committee assisted by the St Mary's Parish ladies committee and other faithful of the Church provided food, sweets and refreshments which were enjoyed by the attendants of the bazaar.

Reverend Genard Lazar, Parish Priest; extended his welcome and gratitude on behalf of the Parish to all those who organised, donated, helped and supported this cause in anyway. Mr. Chris Goffett, parish president, also spoke of the joy of the parish committee in organising such an event.

May our gracious Lord God continue to bless and guard our Holy Church and Assyrian nation through His Son Jesus Christ our Saviour.

There were several Assyrians visited the Catholicos Patriarch in the residence of Mar Meelis Zaia, now Metropolitan. Sometimes I used to sit there listening to the modern Assyrian language which I cannot speak. Yet I understood some words here and there. Some of these Assyrians had seen me in my previous visits. Some others have heard about me or read articles written by me in the Voice of the East bi-monthly magazine.

Ramsina and Michael Lee invited me to their house for dinner. They had come to meet me at the airport. They were willing to show me the city. I replied that I am not interested to see the city as I had seen it in 1987 and 1989. Then they wanted to take me to the Indian restaurant to take Indian food. I replied that I have taken Indian food since my birth. Finally we had the food from one Indian restaurant. I had a good time with Ramsina and her sister Rowena Daniali and their families. Michael Lee is a good photographer and he had taken many photos of my visit to their home. Some pictures are included in this book.

William Talya is an old man in the Mart Mariam parish in Sydney. His daughter and grand daughter had visited our church in Trichur and therefore they invited me for breakfast after Holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam church on 14 December. Philemon Darmo, with whom I was in correspondence for many years, and some other Assyrian guests were in their home. They fed me with good Assyrian food much more than my stomach could digest.

Sydney is bigger than Melbourne and much bigger than Brisbane and Perth. All other cities have lesser population than this first four. Darwin where many students are going from India now has only the 16th place with a population of 120,652.

THE EARLY COLONY

In 1770, British sea captain Lieutenant James Cook landed in Botany Bay on the Kurnell Peninsula. It is here that James Cook made first contact with an Aboriginal community known as the Gweaga. Under instruction from the British government, a convict settlement was

founded by Arthur Phillip, who arrived at Sydney circa in 1828, looking north over Hyde Park towards the harbour Botany Bay with a fleet of 11 ships on 18 January 1788. This site was soon determined to be unsuitable for habitation, owing to poor soil and a lack of reliable fresh water. Phillip subsequently founded the colony further up the coast, at Sydney Cove on Port Jackson on 26 January 1788. He named it after the British Home Secretary, Thomas Townsend, Lord Sydney, in recognition of Sydney's role in issuing the charter authorizing Phillip to establish a colony. *The original name was intended to be Albion until Phillip decided upon Sydney.*

In April 1789 a disease, thought to be smallpox, killed an estimated 500 to 1000 Aboriginal people between Broken Bay and Botany Bay. There was violent resistance to British settlement, notably by the warrior Pemulwuy in the area around Botany Bay, and conflicts were common in the area surrounding the Hawkesbury River. By 1820 there were only a few hundred Aborigines and Governor Macquarie had begun initiatives to 'civilize, Christianize and educate' the Aborigines by removing them from their clans.

Macquarie's tenure as Governor of New South Wales was a period when Sydney improved from its basic State. Roads, bridges, wharves and public buildings were constructed by British and Irish convicts, and by 1822 the town had banks, markets, well-established thoroughfares and an organized constabulary. The 1830s and 1840s were periods of urban development, including the development of the first suburbs, as the town grew rapidly when ships began arriving from Britain and Ireland with immigrants looking to start a new life in a new country. On 20 July 1842 the municipal council of Sydney *was incorporated and the town was declared the first city in Australia,* with John Hosking the first elected mayor.

The first of several gold rushes started in 1851, and the port of Sydney has since seen many waves of people arriving from around the world. Rapid suburban development began in the last quarter of the 19th

century with the advent of steam powered tramways and railways. With industrialization Sydney expanded rapidly, and by the early 20th century it had a population numbering more than one million. The Great Depression hit Sydney badly. One of the highlights of the Depression era, however, was the completion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932.

19th and early 20th century

A rivalry has traditionally existed between Sydney and Melbourne since the gold rushes of the 1850s grew the capital of Victoria into Australia's largest and richest city. Sydney overtook Melbourne in population in the early years of the 20th century, and has remained the largest city in Australia since this time. During the 1970s and 1980s Sydney's CBD with the Reserve Bank and Australian Stock Exchange clearly surpassed Melbourne as the nation's financial capital. Throughout the 20th century, especially in the decades immediately following World War II, Sydney continued to expand as large number of Europeans and later Asian immigrants populated the metropolitan area. *The culture brought about by immigrants was a major factor in the city's diverse and highly cosmopolitan atmosphere.*

Topography

Sydney's urban area is in a coastal basin, which is bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the East, the Blue Mountains to the West, the Hawkesbury River to the North and the Royal National Park to the South. It lies on a submergent coastline, where the ocean level has risen to flood deep river valleys (ria) carved in the hawkesbury sandstone. Port Jackson, better known as Sydney Harbour, is one such ria and is the largest natural harbour in the world. The Sydney area is not affected by significant earthquakes. The urban area has around 70 harbour and ocean beaches, including the famous Bondi Beach. Sydney's urban area covers 1,687 km^2 (651 sq mi) as at 2001.The Sydney Statistical Division, used for census data, is the

unofficial metropolitan area and covers 12,145 km² (4,689 sq mi). This area includes the Central Coast, the Blue Mountains, and national parks and other unurbanised land. This makes Sydney the third largest urban agglomeration in the world (with a population of over 3 million) behind Brasília (14,400 km²) and Tokyo (13,500 km²).

Geographically, Sydney lies over two regions: the Cumberland Plain, a relatively flat region lying to the south and west of the harbour, and the Hornsby Plateau, a sandstone plateau lying mainly to the north of the harbour and dissected by steep valleys. The parts of the city with the oldest European development are located in the flat areas south of the harbour. The North Shore was slower to develop because of its hilly topography and lack of access across the harbour. The Sydney Harbour Bridge was opened in 1932 and linked the North Shore to the rest of the city.

Climate

Sydney has a temperate climate with warm summers and cool winters, and rainfall spread throughout the year. The weather is moderated by proximity to the ocean, and more extreme temperatures are recorded in the inland western suburbs. The warmest month is January, with an average air temperature range at Observatory Hill of 18.6-25.8 °C (65.5-78.4 °F). There is an average of 14.6 days a year over 30 °C (86.0 °F). The maximum recorded temperature was 45.3 °C (113.5 °F) on 14 January 1939 at the end of a 4-day heat wave across Australia. The winter is mildly cool, with temperatures rarely dropping below 5 °C (41 °F) in coastal areas.

The coldest month is July, with an average range of 8-16.2 °C (46.4-61.2 °F). The lowest recorded minimum at Observatory Hill was 2.1 °C (35.8 °F). Rainfall is fairly evenly divided between summer and winter, but is slightly higher during the first half of the year, when easterly winds dominate. The average annual rainfall, with moderate to low variability, is 1,217 mm (48 in), falling on an average 138

days a year. Snowfall was last reported in the Sydney City area in 1836. However, a July 2008 fall of graupel, or soft hail, mistaken by many for snow, has raised the possibility that the 1836 event was not snow, either.

Bondi Beach in Sydney's east. Sydney's warm weather in summer makes its beaches very popular.

The city is not affected by cyclones. The El Niño Southern Oscillation plays an important role in determining Sydney's weather patterns: drought and bushfire on the one hand, and storms and flooding on the other, associated with the opposite phases of the oscillation. Many areas of the city bordering bush land have experienced bushfires, notably in 1994 and 2001–02 these tend to occur during the spring and summer. The city is also prone to severe hail storms and wind storms. One such storm was the 1999 hailstorm, which severely damaged Sydney's eastern and city suburbs. The storm produced massive hailstones of at least 9 cm (3.5 in) in diameter and resulting in insurance losses of around AUD $1.7 billion in less than five hours.

The city is also prone to flash flooding from enormous amounts of rain caused by East Coast Lows (a low pressure depression which deepens off the state usually in winter and early spring which can bring significant damage by heavy rain, cyclonic winds and huge swells). The most notable event was the great Sydney flood which occurred on 6 August 1986 and dumped a record of 327.6 mm (12.9 in) in the city in 24 hours. This caused major traffic problems and damage in many parts of the metropolitan area.

The Bureau of Meteorology has reported that 2002 and 2005 were the warmest summers in Sydney since records began in 1859. 2004 had an average daily maximum temperature of 23.39 °C, 2005 - 23.35 °C, 2002 - 22.91 °C and 2003 - 22.65 °C. The average daily maximum between 1859 and 2004 was 21.6 °C (70.9 °F). For the first nine months of 2006 the mean temperature was 18.41 °C

(65.1 °F); the warmest year previously was 2004 with 18.51 °C (65.32 °F). Since November 2003, there have been only two months in which the average daily maximum was below average: March 2005 (about 1 °C below average) and June 2006 (0.7 °C below average). The summer of 2007-08 proved to be one of the coolest on record. The Bureau of Meteorology reported that it was the coolest summer in 11 years, the wet summer in six years, and one of only three summers in recorded history to lack a maximum temperature above 31 °C (88 °F).

Fairfield, near Sydney, is the area where a lot of Assyrians have settled. City of Fairfield has a population of 190,657 persons. Anwar Khoshaba, an Assyrian, was the Mayor of Fairfield when I visited that place in June 2000. Now he is a member of the city council. Now there are some other Assyrians too in the city council. They do not belong to the same political party. Still they have an influence in the City of Fairfield and the decisions the Council makes.

There are cultural clubs for the Assyrians to participate in the social and cultural activities of these ethnic minorities. Of course Australia has a lot of ethnic groups living somewhat peacefully except some crisis aroused recently.

History of Assyrians in Sydney and Melbourne: Rev. Yonan Kiwarkis is the first Assyrian priest who came to Australia with his family and died in Australia as an archdeacon of the Assyrian Church of the East in Sydney. His son is active in the Assyrian happenings in Sydney now. Since Archdeacon Kiwarkis Yonan was the official escort in my trip to Melbourne, I was happy to meet some members of his family in Sydney during this visit. The present generation does not know the sacrifice Rev. Younan Kiwarkis had done in establishing the Assyrian congregation in the early years in Sydney.

Archdeacon Younan Giwargis was born on the 5th December 1927 in Moscow, Russia. His father Dadisho was from the village

Khardalanus near Qochanis and his mother Almas was from the istrict of Salamas in Iran.

He was baptized in Moscow in a Russian Orthodox Church and by 930 the family moved to Salamas in time to be caught in the Great alamas Earthquake. They left Iran in 1933 and with 17 other families nade their way to Mosul where they lived for two years before naking their way south to Tel Masas in Syria.

On 31 May 1970 Rev. Younan Kiwarkis came to settle down in ydney. On 19 Sept 1976 His Grace Bishop Narsai De Baz of ebanon ordained Rev. Younan as archdeacon. In 1985 Bishop Mar Meelis was appointed in Sydney as the Bishop of Australia. rchdeacon Younan died on Sunday 8 July 2007 aged 80.

He had to suffer hardships in the Supreme Court case in which he vas examined in the Court in 1989 for which I was a personal witness. is true that he did not know enough English at that time. I feel that e had to pretend that he did not know even what he knew, because ome replies could go against him. Usually attorneys brief them about ne replies they want from the witness in order to argue the case in neir favour.

ustice Young (he was not really young), who heard the case did not now any Assyrian language. The Queen's Counsels of both sides id not know the Assyrian language. An interpreter was used in the ourt to explain the questions asked by the lawyer and the answer iven by the priest in the court. As I was listening to that in the Supreme ourt I had a feeling that the priest and the interpreter had hard time uring that exercise. As he was a crucial witness his lack of nderstanding English could create complications. Anyhow victory the case was for his side.

ome Assyrians wanted to erect a Plaque in Fairfield near Sydney here many Assyrians reside in memory of Assyrians who died during e World Wars fighting alongside Australia. But in the council meetings ontroversies began to develop regarding whether the word Chaldean

should also be added to the word Assyrian. During the writing of this book the following news item appeared in the internet.

> "The Department of Defense has approved the Plaque as is and will now go into the design stage with the town planners and it is no longer necessary to deal with the city council of Fairfield, near Sydney.
>
> Nick Lalich is the Mayor of Fairfield City in charge of running the fourth largest City in the State of New South Wales with a multi-million dollar budget and 180,000 residents to look after.
>
> Emmanuel Brikha is a 22 year old university student who is in charge of the youth division of a local branch of the Liberal Party of Australia."

I hope the Assyrians will amicably settle this Plaque issue without bringing shame to this minority Assyrian community in Australia. For the information of those readers who do not know about this Assyrian community let me add that Mayor Nick Lalich is not an Assyrian, but the young Emmanuel Brikha is an Assyrian.

My wrist watch stopped working. It is important to know correct time to be ready to go different places when the car is ready. I told Rev. Genard Lazar who was attending to my needs regarding his help for me to take my wrist watch to the shop to repair. He took it from me and asked me not to worry about it. H will see to it. I asked him about my wrist watch again and again. I told him that I did not have a spare watch. The next day he came with a new wrist watch and told me to forget about the old one. The new wrist watch is a gift from him and his wife. I put it on with much happiness.

The next morning when I needed to take it off before taking a bath I tried my best to open the strap. But it was so tight. I used my fingers and my teeth to take it off. Finally I needed help. So I decided to request Mar Narsai Metropolitan who was available downstairs. He

is of my age, only three weeks older. Since he is the only prelate in our Church who has visited India four times I was close to him in many ways. He had his both hands free. Therefore he could manage to take my wristwatch off from my hands.

Mar Narsai Metropolitan's first visit to India was in November 1995 to negotiate and affect unity of the old and new calendar groups. The second visit was unexpected when Bishop Poulose Mar Poulose expired on the surgery table in the posh Apollo Hospital in Chennai (Madras) on 24 March 1998. The third visit was a happy one in January 2000 to accompany His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch in the historic apostolic visit to India. The fourth visit was again sad when Mar Timotheus Metropolitan expired on 6th of August 2001 in Trichur.

My contact with Mar Narsai Metropolitan is not restricted to his four Indian visits. I attended his Holy Qurbana in Assyrian Hall, Ealing London, England in 1984. We became instant friends and talked about the possibilities of uniting our Church divided into old calendar and new calendar groups. The old calendar is the one created by Julius Caesar, the Roman Emperor before Jesus Christ and even now followed by the group under His Holiness Mar Addai II of Baghdad. During the same evening of our first meeting I was the Chief Guest in the dinner reception arranged in the Assyrian Hall in Ealing in Mar Narsai's honour by the Assyrian congregation of England.

At that time the Assyrians had no church building in England. At the same time the Assyrian Hall in Ealing was being used for the purpose of conducting Holy Qurbana, as I myself had done in the same Hall before the present Assyrian church was bought from the Anglicans in 1987 in Hanwell near Ealing. As the Church has no hall for breakfast, at present our people after Holy Qurbana in Hanwell have to go to Ealing for the breakfast in the Assyrian Hall.

I had the privilege of staying with Mar Narsai Metropolitan in hi Palace in Beirut, Lebanon in 1998. I had occasions to meet him in a Holy Synods from 1997 to 2006. We were together in Pro- Orient (Vienna) as well as Vatican-Assyrian Dialogue in Rome and othe places. It is not easy to remember all the dates from my memory.

There were visitors to meet and receive blessings from the Catholico Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in the residence in Cecil Hills where w were staying as guests of the local Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia. A Assyrian doctor named David was there. Since I had some troubl of going to the bath room often His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV advise me to take the medical advice from Dr. David. I replied that I shoul wait till I return to India. My fear was that I would be hospitalized i I consulted the doctors in Sydney. I had programs all lined up befor I was scheduled to reach Trichur one day before Christmas.

The doctor gave me two gifts. One was an automatic Blood Pressur Monitor made by the OMRON. This machine is intended for hom use. This oscillometric monitor does not need a stethoscope. Thi monitor detects one's blood movement through brachial artery an converts the movements into a digital reading. I began to use thi OMERON SEM 2 monitor very frequently as soon as I got it Nowadays I use it very rarely. Because my doctor in Trichur says m Blood Pressure is steady 140 -80. I will have to worry when it goe to 160 and 95 and above.

The instruction manual suggests that we have to check the Bloo Pressure at the same every day. Within one hour of waking i recommended. Incorrect postures should be avoided during th measuring of the Blood Pressure. Incorrect postures are

1. Arched back leaning forwards
2. Sitting cross- legged
3. Sitting on a sofa or at a low table so that you tend to lean towards

The higher is Systolic and the lower one is Diastolic. Those who are not in medical profession tell me that their Blood Pressure is 80 – 140. Because, first you generally say the lower number. I often correct them to tell 140 - 80. That is the correct way. The bigger number is first and the smaller number is second in the case of Blood Pressure. I think the measurement in the medical text book is 120 -80 for normal Blood Pressure. A doctor measuring my Blood Pressure told me few years ago, "Bishop, you are like a baby". I asked why. The doctor explained because my Blood Pressure measured 120 - 80, which is normal for babies. OMRON SEM-2 also shows the pulse in addition to BP. I think the normal Pulse rate is about 70 and above.

The booklet gives warnings to those who depend on the results of this monitor. That warning note is useful to my readers who are not medical doctors. Self measurement is okay. But self diagnosis and treatment is dangerous. As I type these words in the early morning I took the measurement of my B.P. The result showed 124 - 63. Here Systolic is perfect but Diastolic is lower than usual. The Pulse is 72. Okay. One more thing the patients should remember is not to talk while measuring the BP.

The Assyrian doctor gave me another gadget from the same company; OMRON. It is called S.T.E.P.S. Pedometer HJ -005. The information says the recommended step per day is 10,000 for health and weight management. This small meter when attached to our body will measure the steps we make a day. Ten thousand steps are recommended.

Walk your way to good health with S.T.E.P.S.

To lose weight and to keep it off, you need to get moving. Walking at a moderate pace for 30 or more minutes burns stored fat and can build muscles to speed up your metabolism. Brisk walking enhances your health and general well-being, and is suitable for people of all ages. It's time to work 30-minutes walks into your busy lifestyle!

What your pedometer HJ-005 does:

1. Counts the number of steps

2. Step sensitivity adjustment (for more precise step counts)

Prescription for Health:

Walk 10, 000 steps a day.

Kerala Friends

Dr. Kollannur Ittimani is practicing in Sydney as a medical doctor for more than 3 decades. His son is also a doctor working in Sydney. He is an active member of the Malayalee community in Sydney. He is a member of the Indian Orthodox Syrian Church which is under His Holiness Catholicos Mar Didymos I of Kottayam, India. Dr. Ittimani's daughter was married to Mr. Jaison, brother- in–law of Deepak Mooken, my nephew. Dr. Ittimani had helped me during my visit of 1989 for medical check-up. He advised me to control my diabetes. I visited the house of Dr. Ittimani for lunch and photo taken on the occasion is given in this book.

I had some Kerala friends in Sydney other than Dr. Kollannur Ittimani. But I did not contact them. I knew that there would not be enough time to meet them. One was Dr. Verghese Kurien (Sunny). I had visited Dr. Kurian, a psychiatrist, a product of Christian Medical College, Vellore, South India where our Church in India has membership. I had dinner with Dr. Kurian and his Australian wife Dr. Margaret Allars and daughter Alice on 8th April 1989 in Vaucluse, a beautiful suburb of Sydney. Although I enjoyed my being with him in 1989 I could not visit him in 2000 as well as in 2008.

Dr. K.C. Abraham is another Indian friend I wanted to meet in Sydney. Abi, as we call him, teaches English in Wetherill Park College in Fairfield. He is co-ordinating different courses of this college such as animal husbandry, hospitality, office skills, small business, flower arrangements, catering, fashion, computers etc. This is meant for unemployed people, who cannot speak English well.

He has some Assyrians in his office. I send him **Voice of the East** magazine once every two months ever since I had lunch in his home in April 1989. He passes on these magazines to the Assyrian friends after he reads them. I wish some members of our Church will pass on the Voice of the East to friends and neighbors who do not know about our Church. By that method my work for typing and editing this magazine every two months will be of some use to many people. He is an active member of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church in Kerala.

My sitar which I was carrying in my trip of 1989 was bought by him for his daughter to learn. I do not think that sitar is an easy instrument. He told me recently when he visited me in Trichur that he is still keeping that sitar with him. If I get a chance to visit Sydney again I will try to visit him and play on my old instrument which is in Sydney for more than two decades.

I attended the annual Entertainment of the Malayalee Association in Sydney. In April 1989 I was present when Mr. C. M. Bhandari, Deputy High Commissioner of India in Canberra came to preside over the function. Hindus, Christians and Muslims are members of that association. In 2009 there are many more Indian members working in Sydney.

For Kerala people celebrations of Onam and other festivals are very important. As they live far from Kerala they hold nostalgic memories of their land, customs, songs in the mother tongue which are precious. In one of my seven humour books I had mentioned about an old lady who went to stay with her son in Bombay. When she came to Kerala friends came to greet her and enquire about her sojourn in Bombay. They asked her which language is best in the world; English, Marati or Malayalam. Her answer was simple.

"Of course, Malayalam." She replied. They asked her "Why?" She replied, "Because, I understand it when anybody speaks in that language." That is a simple and honest answer.

Chapter 2

Third Visit to Melbourne

My young friend Joseph Haweil telephoned me while I was at Sydney inviting me to stay with his family during my short visit to his city. I left the decision to the priest and the church committee. During the previous visit in July 2000 I had stayed with my old friend Rev. Gewargis Toma. When I am in a city outside my jurisdiction which is India I have to respect the decisions of the local church there. In some cases somebody was jealous of some body else. If I stay with one person another person who thinks of himself as a better person may be angry with me. In some cases some parishes have booked me in the hotels. I always discourage my hosts reserving a place for me in a local hotel. It is a waste of God's money.

Personally I am happy with any family. Anyhow the choice was in the family of Joseph. His father Jacob Haweil was there to receive me at the airport. I was in touch with Joseph Haweil through e-mails and telephone. Finally in reality I was with him. Jacob's brother is a Deacon in the Church. Joseph Haweil is not a deacon. But this young man knows more about our Church than many deacons.

Melbourne is the second largest city in Australia with an estimated population of 3 million and 892,419 people. Melbourne was established in 1835, about 47 years after the first European settlement in Australia. Queen Victoria declared it a city in 1847. Gold was discovered in 1850s. Thus Melbourne became one of the wealthiest cities in the world by 1880s. It was the national capital of Australia until 1927 when the present capital Canberra was built.

Melbourne (pronounced /Èm[lbZn/, in Australia [ÈmelbYn], or locally [ÈmælbYn] is the capital and largest city of the State of Victoria, and the second most populous city in Australia. The

Melbourne city centre is the anchor of the larger geographic region and statistical division known as the **Greater Melbourne** metropolitan area—of which Melbourne is the common name.

Melbourne was named after the 2nd Viscount Melbourne, William Lamb in 1837; the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during the reigns of both King William IV and Queen Victoria. It is located on the lower reaches of the Yarra River and on the northern and eastern shorelines of Port Phillip, extending into their hinterland.

It was established in 1835 (47 years after the first European settlement of Australia), by free settlers from Van Diemen's Land,[as a pastoral township around the estuary of the Yarra River. Melbourne was declared a city by Queen Victoria in 1847, and became the capital of Victoria when the district was declared a separate colony from New South Wales in 1851. When gold was discovered in the district during the 1850s (which sparked the Victorian gold rush) Melbourne was transformed into a wealthy metropolis, and one of the largest and wealthy cities in the world, by the 1880s. Upon the Federation of Australia in 1901, Melbourne served as the seat of government of the newly founded Commonwealth of Australia until 1927 while the new nation's capital of Canberra was being built.

Melbourne is a centre for arts, commerce, education, industry, sports and tourism. Since 2002, it has been consistently ranked among the World's Most Livable Cities by *The Economist*. In 2008, it was also recognised as a beta world city+ in the World Cities Study Group's inventory by Loughborough University.

The city is notable for its distinct blend of Victorian and contemporary architecture, expansive parks and gardens and multicultural society. It is also home to the World's largest tram network. It is recognized as Australia's 'cultural and sporting capital' and is home to some of the nation's most significant cultural and sporting institutions. In 2007,

it was also ranked in the top five university cities in the Globa University Cities Index by RMIT, and was classified as a City o Literature by UNESCO in 2008.

Melbourne has also played host to a number of significant internationa and national events, including: the Parliament of Australia's first sittin in 1901, 1956 Summer Olympics, Commonwealth Heads o Government Meeting in 1981, World Economic Forum in 2000, 200 Commonwealth Games and G20 Summit in the same year.

Early history and foundation

Before the arrival of European settlers, the area was occupied for a estimated 31,000 to 40,000 years by under 20,000 hunter-gatherer from three indigenous regional tribes: the Wurundjeri, Boonwurrun and Wathaurong. The area was an important meeting place for clan and territories of the Kulin nation alliance as well as a vital source o food and water. The first European settlement in Victoria wa established in 1803 on Sullivan Bay, near present-day Sorrento, bu this settlement was abandoned due to a perceived lack of resources It would be 30 years before another settlement was attempted.

In May and June 1835, the area that is now central and norther Melbourne was explored by John Batman, a leading member of the Port Phillip Association, who negotiated a transaction fo 600,000 acres (2,400 km^2; 940 sq mi) of land from eight Wurundjer elders. Batman selected a site on the northern bank of the Yarra River, declaring that "this will be the place for a village", and returne to Launceston in Tasmania (then known as Van Diemen's Land) However, by the time a settlement party from the Association arrive to establish the new village, a separate group led by John Pasco Fawkner had already arrived aboard the *Enterprize* and establishe a settlement at the same location, on 30 August 1835.

The two groups ultimately agreed to share the settlement. It i unknown that by which name Melbourne was called before the arriva

of Europeans. Early European settlers mistranslated the words "Doutta-galla" which are believed to have been the name of a prominent tribal member, but said by some to also translate as "treeless plain". This was nevertheless used as one of the early names for the colony.

Batman's Treaty with the Aborigines was annulled by the New South Wales government (then governing all of eastern mainland Australia), which compensated the Association Although this meant the settlers were now trespassing on Crown land, the government reluctantly accepted the settlers' *fait accompli* and allowed the town (known at first by various names, including 'Bearbrass') to remain.

In 1836, Governor Bourke declared the city as the administrative capital of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, and commissioned the first plan for the Hoddle Grid in 1837. Later that year, the settlement was named Melbourne after the British prime minister William Lamb, 2nd Viscount Melbourne, who resided in the village of Melbourne in Derbyshire, and the General Post Office opened under that name on 13 April 1837. Melbourne was declared a city by letters patent of Queen Victoria, issued on 25 June 1847.

The Port Phillip District became a separate colony of Victoria in 1851 with Melbourne as its capital.

Victorian gold rush

The discovery of gold in Victoria is the same year led to the Victorian gold rush, and Melbourne, which provided most service industries and served as the major port for the region, experienced rapid growth.

Migration to Melbourne, particularly from overseas including Ireland and China, caused a massive population increase. Slums developed including a temporary "tent city" established on the southern banks of the Yarra, the Little Lonsdale district and at Chinatown.

The population growth and flow of gold into the city helped stimulat a program of grand civic building beginning with the design an construction of many of Melbourne's surviving institutional building including Parliament House, the Treasury Building and Treasur Reserve, the Old Melbourne Gaol, Victoria Barracks, the Stat Library, Supreme Court, University, General Post Office, an Government House, the Melbourne Town Hall, St Paul's, St Patrick' cathedrals and several major markets including the surviving Quee Victoria Market. The city's inner suburbs were planned, to be linke by boulevards and gardens. Melbourne had become a major financ centre, home to several banks, the Royal Mint to Australia's firs stock exchange in 1861.

Before the arrival of white settlers, the indigenous population in th district was estimated at 15,000, but following settlement the numbe had fallen to less than 800, and continued to decline with an estimate 80% decrease by 1863, due primarily to introduced diseases particularly smallpox.

The Land Boom and Bust

By the 1880s, Melbourne's boom was peaking. The city had becom the second largest in the British Empire (after London) and the riches in the world. Melbourne hosted five international exhibitions at th large purpose-built Exhibition Building in the decade of prosperity.

During an 1885 visit, English journalist George Augustus Henry Sal coined the phrase "Marvelous Melbourne", which stuck long int the twentieth century. Growing building activity culminated in the "Lan Boom" which in 1888 reached a peak of speculative developmen fuelled by consumer confidence and escalating land value. As a resu of the boom, large commercial buildings, coffee palaces, terrac housing and palatial mansions proliferated in the city, and th establishment of a hydraulic facility in 1887 paved the way for elevator and high-rise buildings to change dramatically the city's skyline. Thi

period also saw the expansion of a major radial rail-based transport network.

The brash boosterism which typified Melbourne during this time came to a halt in 1891 when the start of a severe depression hit the city's economy, sending the local finance and property industries into chaos during which 16 small banks and building societies collapsed and 133 limited companies went into liquidation. The Melbourne financial crisis helped trigger the Australian economic depression of 1890s and the Australian banking crisis of 1893. The effects of the depression on the city were profound, although it did continue to grow slowly during the early twentieth century.

Federation of Australia

At the time of Australia's federation on 1 January 1901, Melbourne became the temporary seat of government of the federation. The first federal parliament was convened on 9 May 1901 in the Royal Exhibition Building, where it was located until 1927, when it was moved to Canberra. The governor-general remained at Government House until 1930 and many major national institutions remained in Melbourne well into the twentieth century. While Sydney had overtaken Melbourne in size, Melbourne's transport networks were more extensive. Flinders Street Station was the world's busiest passenger station in 1927 and Melbourne's tram network overtook Sydney's to become the worlds largest in the 1940s. During World War II, Melbourne industries thrived on wartime production and the city became Australia's leading manufacturing centre.

Post-war period

After the war, Melbourne expanded rapidly, its growth boosted by an influx of immigrants and the prestige of hosting the Olympic Games in 1956. The post-war period saw a major urban renewal of the

CBD and St Kilda Road which significantly modernised the city. New Melbourne City Council fire regulations and redevelopment saw most of the taller pre-war CBD buildings demolished, despite the efforts of the National Trust of Victoria and the Save Collins Street movement. Many of the larger suburban mansions from the boom era were either demolished or subdivided.

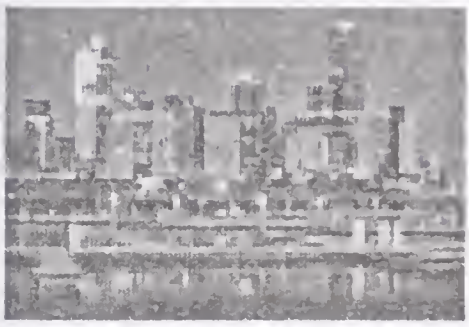
ICI House (now Orica House), commenced in 1955, was a powerful symbol of the Olympic city's modern aspirations

Whelan the Wrecker became a symbol of Melbourne's progressive spirit during this era. To counter the trend towards low-density suburban residential growth, the government began a series of controversial "slum reclamation" public housing projects in the inner city by the Housing Commission of Victoria which resulted in demolition of many neighbourhoods and a proliferation of high-rise towers. In later years, increasing motor traffic led to major freeway development, causing the city to sprawl outwards. The Henry Bolte Victorian government sought to rapidly modernise Melbourne. Major road projects including the remodelling of St Kilda Junction, the widening of Hoddle Street and then the extensive 1969 Melbourne Transportation Plan changed the face of the city into an automobile dominated environment.

Australia's financial and mining booms between 1969 and 1970 resulted in establishment of the headquarters of many major companies (BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto, among others) in the city. Nauru's then booming economy fuelled several ambitious investments in Melbourne, such as Nauru House. Melbourne remained Australia's business and financial capital until the late 1970s, when it began to lose this primacy to Sydney.

As the centre of Australia's "rust belt", Melbourne experienced the worst of Victoria's economic slump between 1989 to 1992, following the collapse of several of its financial institutions. In 1992 the newly elected Kennett Coalition government began a campaign to revive the economy with an aggressive development campaign of public works centred on Melbourne and the promotion of the city as a tourist destination with a focus on major events and sports tourism, attracting the Australian Grand Prix to the city. Major projects included the Melbourne Museum, Federation Square, the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, Crown Casino and CityLink tollway. Other strategies included the privatisation of some of Melbourne's services, including power and public transport, but also a reduction in funding to public services such as health and education.

Contemporary Melbourne



Melbourne's CBD from Docklands at twilight

Since 1997, Melbourne has maintained significant population and employment growth. There has been substantial international investment in the city's industries and property market. Major inner-city urban renewal has occurred in areas such as Southbank, Port Melbourne, Melbourne Docklands and, more recently, South Wharf.

Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed tha Melbourne sustained the highest population increase and economic growth rate of any Australian capital city in the three years endec June 2004.

There are a lot of beautiful sites around Melbourne, but I decidec not to go around. I had seen them in my visit of 1987.

In July 2000 I had seen some parts of Melbourne when I went tc read a paper in the Lumen Seminar in the Australian Catholic University's Melbourne campus. I had met many scholars in tha Seminar. I had to face opposition from the Coptic Bishop Suriel whc had come as a substitute for my friend, Metropolitan Amba Bishoi. I was on the theological controversy of Bishop Nestorius o Constantinople who died in 451 A.D.

It was a shock to me in 2006 when I met Amba Bishoi at the Worlc Council of Churches Assembly in Porto Allegro in Brazil. He avoidec me. When I chased him he told me that he is angry with me, because I attacked his Patriarch in the Melbourne seminar. I do not digress into that controversy of 431 at Ephesus between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius of Constantinople.

His Grace Dr. Mar Aprem
Metropolitan of Malabar and All India
[Chaldean Syrian] Church of the East

Your Grace,

Receive greetings in the name of our Lord.

Recently an Assyrian family from our Parish in Melbourne has informed me that they wish to donate the sum of $575 Australian Dollars to the Mar Thimotheus Memorial Orphanage of our Church in India. I gladly accepted their payment and have prepared a bank cheque to forward to you in India. The letter which includes the cheque shall be sent immediately. Please note that $31.65 were subtracted from the $575.00 due to special bank and postage

charges. So in total $543.35 or nearly 20,000 rupees have been donated.

I ask Your Grace to please inform the Orphanage authorities to provide an official letter confirming that they have received the funds donated by Mrs. Rita Kina and forwarded to the Orphanage by me. This letter can be sent to my mailing address.

Yours in Christ,

Joseph

While I was staying with Joseph Haweil, Dean Kalimniou, a member of the Greek Orthodox Church came to see me along with his wife on Sunday 21 December 2008. He is a good friend of our Assyrian Church. He is a lawyer by profession.

Melbourne Parish Together With H.G. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis Celebrate 30-Year Anniversary

By Joseph Haweil

Melbourne, Australia

His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of the Diocese of Western United States conducted a weeklong Episcopal visit to the city of Melbourne, Australia commencing on the 26th of May 2009, accompanied by Rev Genard Lazar, Ss. Peter and Paul Parish Priest - Sydney. Having initially arrived in Sydney and welcomed officially by His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia AM, Metropolitan of Australia and New Zealand, as well as having conducted the Eucharistic Liturgy in Greenfield Park's St. Hurmizd Cathedral.

His Grace made the journey to Melbourne to partake in the 30-year anniversary celebrations honouring the purchase of St. George Church located in Reservoir, Melbourne. While in Melbourne, His Grace took the time to visit with many Assyrian families and bestowed upon them his Episcopal blessings.

On Sunday the 31st of May, His Grace consecrated the Euchariste Liturgy on the Feast of the Pentecost, one of seven holy feast days c the Church of the East, for hundreds of Melbourne's faithful. Later i the evening a dinner function was held at Ishtar Reception Cente celebrating the 30–year anniversary of the purchase of Melbourne St. George Church. It is worthy of noting that the following clerg and dignitaries were also in attendance:

His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis (Bishop of the Diocese of Wester United States – Arizona), Rev. Genard Lazar, Rev. Gewargis Tom (Priest of St. George Church – Melbourne), Rev. Hurmizd Gewarg (Priest of St. George Church – Melbourne), The Hon. Yonatha Betkolia MP (Assyrian Representative in the Iranian Parliament an Secretary General of the Assyrian Universal Alliance), Mr. Hermi Shahen (AUA Deputy Secretary General – Sydney), Mr. David Davi (President of the Assyrian Australian National Federation – Sydney Engineer Odisho Malko (President of the Assyrian Writers League Iraq), in addition to other guests who had traveled from oversea and interstate to attend the event. A number of rousing speeche were delivered charting the history of the Melbourne Parish, includin its inception, Reverend clergymen who have served its faithful and i growth from a mere handful of members to more than 500 household today. His Grace delivered a heartfelt address explaining his first tri to Melbourne in 1979 and the series of circumstances which resulte in the purchase of the St. George Church. His Grace discussed th need for faith, understanding, responsibility and humility in th successful operation of a Parish and the requirement that all member work together in a spirit of Christian fellowship.

The tireless efforts of His Beatitude Metropolitan Mar Meelis Zai AM towards the Parish were also noted. In addition, His Grace an all members of the Melbourne church expressed their sincere gratitud to His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch, for hi continuous support and prayers for the success of the church. It i

only through the leadership, diligence and guidance of our beloved Prelates and the generous support of our members that Melbourne's St. George Church and its Assyrian community continue to go from strength to strength.

I tried to spend my time with the Assyrians. I visited the two Indian homes that I had visited in 2000 trip also.

First was Soman Chakola. I had visited him and his wife Sheela and two daughters during my visit in July 2000. Since he is one of the few Indians personally known to me in that area his invitation was expected. I agreed to go to his house for supper on Friday 19th December. He had shifted to a new house. I did not ask for directions because he offered to pick up me from the Assyrian home where I was staying.

The Assyrians were always ready to accompany me. But this time I preferred to go alone as I wanted to talk in my mother tongue Malayalam. It will be boring for an Assyrian just to sit silent when we were talking. In my case when I go to the Assyrian home, I tried to understand some words of their conversation as I learned Aramaic from the age of 14. Some Assyrians have a sneaking suspicion that I understand more than what I admit understanding of their modern Assyrian. Some times I told them that I do understand 50%. But the fact may be that I understand 70% if the topic they discuss is a familiar subject.

Sheela had prepared a good Indian meal for me. I told them that I cannot eat much. I want to reduce my weight, cholesterol and control the sugar level in my blood. More than eating I was interested in sharing the activities of our Church in India. I wanted to know if he knew any other member of our Church in that area. Soman Chakola is indirectly related to me. His aunt is my aunt too. The wife of his father's brother Kochu Mary was the first cousin of my father. The said Kochu Mary is not only his father's sister–in-law, but his mother's first cousin also. You see, how our community is interlinked to each

other. In those days when marriages were arranged by parents or relatives the elders used to look for relations.

Now the present generation does not completely surrender their right to parents. Some of them insist to make the choice of the life partner themselves. Some parents demand that the parents have a right to decide about the choice of life partners for their children. This conflict is painful. I wish and pray if there is a ceasefire between parents and their children on this vital subject.

From Soman Chakola's house my niece Mrs. Honey Gray and her son Paul drove me into their home. Next morning Paul wanted me to play with him. Since I am interested in music I spent some minutes enjoying his guitar recital. I tried to play his regular guitar and the electric guitar. My instrument is sitar and not guitar. Paul wanted me to play cricket with him. Indian's new generation's craze is cricket. In my young days there was no cricket in South India. I played football and later volleyball. Therefore I told Paul that I do not know how to play cricket. He began to teach me how to catch and throw the ball. I caught the ball with my palms open downward. He said no, you have to open your palms open upward. I did catch the next throw in correct way. We both were excited. After a few minutes I told him that I am tired. I am not young like my 12 year old grand nephew.

A Chaldean Priest joins the Assyrian Church

With immense exaltation to our merciful Lord God the faithful of the St. George Parish of the Assyrian Church of the East in Melbourne welcomed the Rev. Hurmizd Dawood Gewargis, formerly priest of the Chaldean Catholic Church in Melbourne, as an assistant to the current priest, the Rev. Gewargis Toma. Having attained BA in Theology from Iraq's prestigious Babylon College and previously working as a priest in Churches in Iraq and Australia, Rev. Hurmizd comes to the Melbourne Church with an intense desire to work sincerely for the glory of God and for the spiritual benefit of Melbourne's Assyrian community.

Rev. Hurmizd conducted his first Eucharistic Liturgy in the tradition of the Church of the East on Sunday 31st of August 2008, being the ecclesiastical date, the Third Sunday of St. Elia. Rev. Hurmizd remarked on the profound joy that filled him on the occasion of the first Eucharistic Liturgy consecrated by him in the Church of the East. Rev. Hurmizd has committed to work to his utmost capacity in intense supplication to Almighty God and submission to the holy canons, rites and traditions of the Assyrian Church of the East and obedience to the prelates in its most apostolic tradition.

Fr. Hurmizd assisted me during Qurbana. He offered to translate my books into Arabic, if I do wish. In the case of Chaldean Catholic priests joining our Assyrian Church, some of our people say that their intention is not to help our Church, but to get married. As our Church permits married clergy I feel that there is nothing wrong for these priests to marry. Two or three years ago one Catholic priest in Kerala converted himself to the Pentecostal Church; he gave testimony of the reason for his leaving the Roman Catholic Church. One listener stood up and asked the priest. "Do not waste our time to find the excuse for your embrace of Pentecostalism. I know that you have left the Catholic Church in order to get married." He replied, "this 75 year old priest cannot think of marriage at this old age."

A young member of our Church in Melbourne parish Joseph Haweil, who is a student for B.A. degree at the University of Melbourne, wrote a report about my visit. Let me quote it here below to see a different view and different style in reporting.

His Beatitude Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of the COE in India visits St. George Parish in Melbourne, Australia

Report by Joseph Haweil, Melbourne

"With open arms and hearts the faithful of St. George Church in Melbourne welcomed His Beatitude Dr. Mar Aprem, Metropolitan of India to their Church on Sunday the 21st of December 2008. On the ecclesiastical date, the Fourth Sunday of Annunciation, His Beatitude consecrated the Holy Qurbana for more than 600 faithful who arrived to take part in the Eucharistic Liturgy and meet the charismatic Metropolitan of the Assyrian Church of the East in India.

Joined by the two Parish Priests, Reverend Gewargis Toma and Reverend Hurmizd Gewargis as well as some 10 deacons, the Parish listened attentively to His Beatitude's inspiring sermon in which he preached on the importance of remembering the spiritual and religious aspects of the Christmas season. His Beatitude asserted that the meaning of the name 'Emmanuel', 'God is with us' (Matthew 1:18-25), should always be remembered and that all of life's actions should first be completed with consultation as to whether or not it is for the glory of God.

Following the conclusion of the Eucharistic Liturgy, St. George Church parishioners attended a breakfast at the Ishtar Reception Centre in honour of His Beatitude's Archiepiscopal Sojourn to Melbourne. His Beatitude regaled the Melbourne Parishioners on his impressions of Australia (being His Beatitude's fourth visit) and on the current position of the Assyrian Church of the East worldwide and in India. Unexpectedly although in a typically charming manner, His Beatitude treated those in attendance to a performance of his favourite Christian song in the Indian language. This performance received a rapturous applause from the St. George Parish members.

As a symbol of love and appreciation towards His Beatitude for his visit to Melbourne, he was presented with a new Episcopal over-coat. His Beatitude imparted his best wishes for the Melbourne Church and offered his prayers for its advancement and success. In concluding his visit, the Metropolitan of India took the time to personally greet all those in attendance who sought to gain His Beatitude's blessings."

Deacon Antawan who was escorting me most of the time invited me to his house for a short prayer. He presented me a Takhsa of Holy Qurbana in old Aramaic and modern Assyrian. It is a heavy book due to plastic coating of each page. Deacon Antawan speaks good English. I am grateful to all Deacons and other Assyrians who spent time with me and gave me some gifts.

Chapter 3

Visit to Perth

In my three previous visits to Australia I had a desire to visit Perth. Therefore when the travel agent suggested that I could get a return ticket to India via Perth even during the Christmas rush I was happy. Owing to the Christmas rush all seats from Sydney to Singapore and on to India were overbooked. Many people wanted to reach home for Christmas. Therefore I routed my return trip via Perth; only for one day though. Later I understood that even tickets from Perth were also not available.

Perth (pronounced /Èp\r¸/ locally [Èp\Ð¸][1] is the capital and largest city of the Australian state of Western Australia. With a population of 1,650,000 (2009), Perth ranks fourth amongst the nation's cities, with a growth rate consistently above the national average. Swan River mineanders through the city of Perth.

Perth was founded on 12 June 1829 by Captain James Stirling, Australian Governor, as the political centre of the free settler Swan River Colony. It has continued to serve as the seat of Government for Western Australia to the present day. Its port, Fremantle is a city in its own right and slightly older than Perth.

The metropolitan area is located in the south west of the continent between the Indian Ocean and a low coastal escarpment known as the Darling Range. The central business district and suburbs of Perth are situated on the Swan River. Perth is ranked 4th on The Economist's 2008 list of the World's Most Livable Cities.

Perth known worldwide as the "City of Lights" as city residents lit their houselights and streetlights as American astronaut John Glenn passed overhead while orbiting the earth on Friendship 7 in 1962.

The city repeated its feat as Glenn passed overhead on the Space Shuttle in 1998.

Perth is the fourth largest city in Australia after Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. It is the only big city in Western Australia.

Perth overtook Adelaide's population only in the early 1980s.

In July 2009 the City of Perth Council gave approval for local Indigenous organisations Abmusic and Noongar Media Enterprises to coordinate the 2010 Skyworks Aboriginal concert.

Although the City of Perth has included an Indigenous component in the Skyworks program of events since 2001, this will be the first year that Abmusic and Noongar Media Enterprises will stage the event.

The concert, which will take place on Supreme Court Gardens on Australia Day, aims to raise the profile of Indigenous performers and encourage wide community attendance in the sprit of uniting all Australians.

Lord Mayor Lisa Scaffidi said that this year's concert will once again form part of the City of Perth's unique Australia Day celebrations.

"This event truly does celebrate the diversity and strength of the Aboriginal culture on our national day", Ms Scaffidi said.

"With Abmusic and Noongar Media Enterprises coordinating the 2010 event we once again look forward to a fantastic afternoon of

music and entertainment where we all can come together and celebrate as one community," she said.

ABOUT ABMUSIC

Abmusic is an Indigenous organisation that provides music education to Aboriginal students and also promotes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing artists. Abmusic successfully organised and presented the WAM Indigenous Music Awards and the WAM Indigenous Showcase as part of the WAMi Festival in 2009.

ABOUT NOONGAR MEDIA ENTERPRISES

Noongar Media Enterprises manages community radio station Noongar Radio100.9FM. Noongar Radio 100.9FM was launched during NAIDOC week and aims to train young Aboriginal broadcasters, promote Indigenous languages and musicians to encourage young Aborigines to take an interest in their culture.

On10th July 2009 the media reported that 24 people from 16 countries became Australian citizens at a special ceremony hosted at the City of Perth Council House to celebrate Constitution Day.

Lord Mayor Lisa Scaffidi welcomed the city's newest citizens saying that our capital was benefiting from the diverse range of people that are choosing to call Perth home.

"Culturally, Perth is growing and we cannot underestimate the role of migrants who play on sharing new cultures and experiences within the community", Ms Scaffidi said.

The new citizens came from countries all over the globe including Azerbaijan, Iran, Mauritius and the Philippines.

City of Perth Chief Executive Officer Frank Edwards administered the ceremony and State Director of Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Paul Farrell presented the Federal Minister's Citizenship Message.

There are Aboriginals living in Melbourne. During my short visit I saw some. Their special dress attracts the attention of others. As a matter of fact some people smiled at me thinking my strange dress made me more curious than the Aboriginals.

I was the guest of Engineer Iyyunny David, nephew of Rev. P.T. Yohannan who taught Aramaic to me in April and May 1954, everyday except sundays in the Mar Aprem Church in Trichur. Thus my summer vacation at the age of 14 was with Aramaic language. I am glad that I did that at the age of 14. That helps me to feel at home in the company of the Assyrians

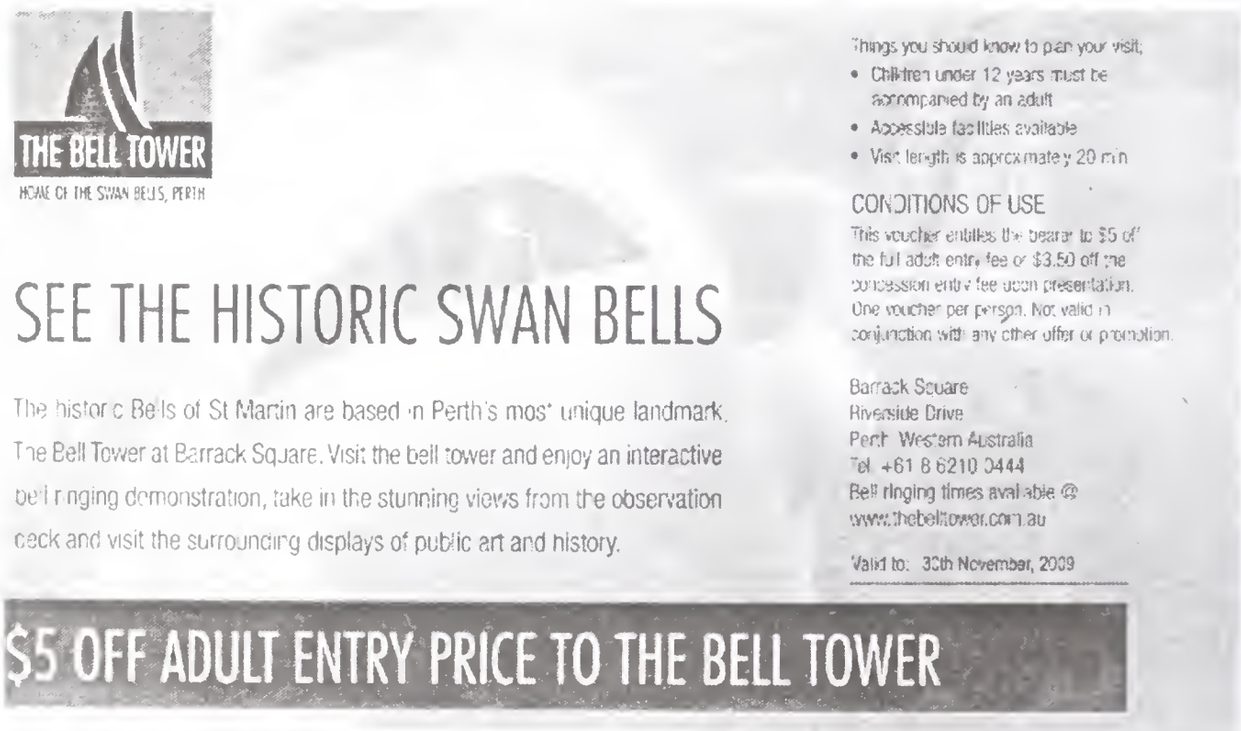
Iyunni works with ROOFMART in Perth. He had a good job in Mumbai and was treasurer of the Mumbai Touring Mission parish. We had a lot to talk to each other about our Church in India and especially Mumbai parish. We talked about our relatives too. I tried to talk to the two grandchildren of Iyunni. Both boys were friendly with me. I used to ignore the children in the houses I visited. The parents too did not allow the children to come near me. I realize now that it was my mistake. We cannot afford to ignore the children, if we want our future church to be strong in faith as today. Jesus taught us to care for the children. Then they will be in touch with us in future. It is two way traffic.

The Bell Tower is the most attractive part of Perth. By the time we had arrived there it was a few minutes late. The regular price for an adult to enter the Bell Tower is $11. We saw what we could see from outside. Later Iyyunni sent me a pamphlet on Perth's unique historic icon. Twelve bells from London were gifted to Perth during Australia's bicentenary in 1988. Those interested in more details can log on to **www.thebelltower.com.au.**

In addition to Iyyunny David my attraction wa to meet a young individual whom I got acquainted with in Kerala some 30 years ago. Josy Williams, son of Rev. Wlliams of Pampady, near Kottayam is an active youth in the C.S.I. (Church of South India). His father was

a reverend in the CSI Church in addition to being a High Schoo teacher in Pampadi. Josy William invited me to a youth conferenc meeting in Pampady. And I went with him to his home. He was college student. After his education he went to Perth and settled dow there with his family. His father Rev. Williams went and settled dow in the USA. I think he is working among the Aboriginals in Perth. A he is interested in religious prayer meeting etc. he had invited me t visit him in Perth. As soon as I met Jason, (brother of Beena, wife c my nephew Deepak Mooken, now working in Muscat) in Sydney got his telephone number in Perth and talked to him informing him c my willingness to meet him in Perth. He was delighted at the news; a least, I was coming to Perth. Then he remembered he has to go t USA to spend Christmas with his father and other members of th family, an international get-to-gether. Thus I missed the chance t meet a good friend after many years.

On 23rd December morning Iyunni and his son Vikas drove me to th house of Kuruvilla Mathew and his wife Valsa. Kuruvilla Mathew, a engineer with Kerala Government, is working in Perth for the pas many years. He celebrated his 70th birthday recently. I know Kuruvilla Mathew for about 35 years.



Kuruvilla is a member of Mar Thoma Syrian Church in Kerala. Although a layman he has taken keen interest in establishing Mar Thoma congregation in Australia. They have got priests in Sydney and Melbourne. Now they are trying to get a priest in Perth with the co-operation of the American Church. He also went to Auckland in New Zealand and attempted to arrange occasional services by Mar Thoma priests. I wish that if our layman had similar enthusiasm in organizing our members scattered throughout the world could organize more worship places. .

They had arranged a Christmas prayer service the following Wednesday. They have no priests. Kuruvilla was saying that he could have arranged the service on 22nd evening if he had known about my transit through Perth. I spent close to two hours in his house. His daughter is married to the grandson of Bishop T.B. Benjamin of Church of South India (CSI) in Kerala. He had set a record as the oldest bishop in India in his 102nd year. He was a friend of mine especially in the time of my arrival in 1968 in Trichur when he was the CSI Bishop of Trichur area living in Shornur. I was given reception in Bethel Ashram (where I was a student in the first batch of the nursery school in 1944) and in CSI Church where I used to go as I studied in classes 1 to 4 in the CMS Parish School, which no longer exists. Bishop T. B. Benjamin passed away in Kottayam in February this year.

I spent a few minutes after having the good Kerala *Dosa* (like a pancake) for breakfast. I chatted with the grand children of Kuruvilla. My friends say that I am always very friendly with children. It is natural having grown up in a family of ten siblings. Perhaps children think I am the younger brother of SANTA CLAUS from whom they could expect some sweets. They do not know that I am diabetic and hence avoid sweets.

The Old Piano in the house captured my attention and I played three well-known Malayalam songs.

1. *Deivakripayil njan ashrayichu,*
avan vazhikale gnan arinju
anugamichidum avanude chuvadugale.

2. *Vandanam Yesupara ninakennum vandanam yesupara—*

3. *Anugrahathode yippol ayakka adiyane yehovaye.———*

The second tune is used in our Church to sing a different song.
Papiyurangunuvo chinthika nin papavazhikaleyum———-

The third tune has a different song used in our Church at the end of meetings.

Sodarar eikyamathyam Buvil
ethra vichitramaho———————————————

Being the Christmas season I played "Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright....." the well known Christmas carol originally written in German (*Stille nacht Heilege nacht)* and translated into hundreds of languages and sung internationally during the Christmas season.

We drove to the University. After dropping his son or son-in-law at the University, Kuruvilla Mathew drove me to Perth International Airport. We reached there sufficiently early for the security formalities. Fortunately it was easier than I anticipated. The airport was not crowded like Sydney and Melbourne.

Chapter 4

Return via Singapore

Kuruvilla Mathew and I reached the airport well ahead of tim
Iyyunni also arrived in the airport to say goodbye to me. I
bye to the two families of David and Kuruvilla
hours visit to Perth.

I had to declare the Australian currency. I had to count
notes again and again to make sure that I do not get in
with the officers. A very kind officer at the immigratio
and told me that I have noticed you filling up these forms.
finish filling up the forms, please don't go and stand in
again. You can walk straight inside. I will be here to hel
did finish formalities without delay. Flight and food

Singapore Changi Airport (IATA: **SIN**, ICAO:
Changi Airport is a major aviation hub in Asia,
Southeast Asian region, and is the main airport in Singap
in Changi on a site of 13 square kilometres (5.0 sq mi),
17.2 kilometres (10.7 mi) north-east from the commerc

Some passengers went out for shopping from the commercial centre.
As a matter of fact we have plenty of things to buy in the duty fre
shops in the airport. In 1989 I had the privilege to spend a day in
Singapore while returning from Australia. Rev. Thomas Mathew, the
Mar Thoma priest who was my host, accompanied me and I bought
a keyboard and a National Panasonic tape recorder cum radio. I
use the same even after 20 years. It is cheaper in commercial market,
if you bargain.

The airport is operated by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapor
(CAAS) and is the home base of Singapore Airlines, Singapore
Airlines Cargo, Silk Air, Tiger Airways, Jetstar Asia Airways, Valuair,

and Jett8 Airlines Cargo. It is a hub for Garuda Indonesia and a secondary hub for Qantas, which uses Singapore as the main stopover point for flights on the Kangaroo Route between Australia and Europe, the latter being the largest foreign airline to operate from the airport with over two million passengers handled annually. As in April 2008, there are about 4,340 weekly flights operated by 80 airlines to cover 116 cities in 59 countries. An important contributor to the Singapore economy, 13,000 people are employed at the airport. The airport accounts for over S$ 4.5 billion in output.

In 2007, the airport handled a record 36,701,556 passengers, a 4.8% increase over the 2006 fiscal year. This made it the 19th busiest airport in the world and the fifth busiest in Asia by passenger traffic in 2007. In addition to being an important passenger traffic hub, the airport is one of the busiest cargo airports in the world, handling 1.89 million tonnes of cargo in 2007. Incentives like the Air Hub Development Fund, first introduced in 2003, have proven effective in attracting airlines here. A new S$300 million fund to strengthen Changi's hub status will start in 2007 when the S$210 million fund expires in 2006. The new S$1.75 billion Terminal 3 opened on 9 January 2008, and Terminal 1 will be upgraded along the lines of the renovated Terminal 2, with the latter costing S$240 million. Changi has been courting both premium and budget travellers with the opening of a commercially important persons terminal by JetQuay and a S$45 million Budget Terminal in 2006.

Since its opening in 1981, the airport has made its mark in the aviation industry as a benchmark for service excellence, winning over 280 awards in a 20-year period from 1987 to 2007, including 19 Best Airport awards in 2007 alone. Changi Airport's efforts to counter the onset of age include periodic physical upgrades to its existing terminals, building of new facilities and taking steps to provide a high level of customer service.

Interesting Accidents and incidents

- 25 March 1991: Singapore Airlines Flight 117, an Airbus A310 that departed from Kuala Lumpur, was hijacked by four men en route to Singapore. The hijackers wanted the plane refueled so that they could fly to Australia. When the plane landed in Singapore, commandos stormed the flight, killing the four Pakistani hijackers.
- 11 October 2007: A Palestinian stowaway, Osama R.M. Shublaq, fell out of the undercarriage of Singapore Airlines Flight 119 from Kuala Lumpur. Airport police arrested him and deported him back to Malaysia a week later.

I got vegetarian meal as I had booked earlier. When I reached Singapore we were told the time is one hour behind; that is 6 p.m. when our watch showed 7 p.m.

People were in Christmas mood. I reached Cochin direct. In my previous visits I had to fly to Madras or Trivandrum and take another flight. Now it is direct flight to Cochin. So much comfort to reach Cochin International Airport at Nedumbassery within a few hours. When we landed in Cochin every body was running to be first in the queue.

I saw a little girl looking at my red cassock and white beard. Her face was not familiar to me. But my face was familiar to her. Most of the children in western countries recognize the face of the Santa Claus. She smiled at me. I too smiled. The two year old girl murmured, **Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells**. I had not kept sweets in my pocket to give her.

A friendly officer at the customs came to me and introduced himself, saying, "I am the son of the Professor of Chemistry. K.P. Antony who taught you at St. Thomas College." He just let me walk through the customs. I was not carrying any dutiable goods. It is nice to be home, sweet home. I am in the midst of people who are familiar with

the attire of a bishop. What a contrast from the American airpor where some immigration officials gaze at me as if I am the eld brother of Osama bin Laden, whose whereabouts even the powerf CIA cannot speculate.

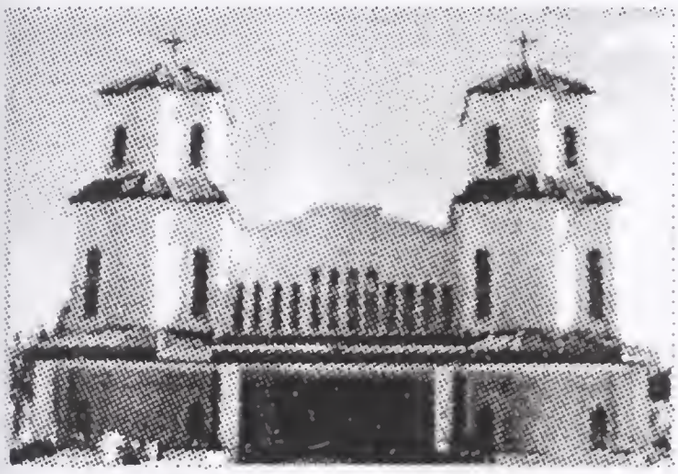
After midnight I reached Trichur, just one hour and ten minutes b car.

APPENDIX

Assyrian Church of the East in Australia.

There is a useful website for the Archdiocese of Australia & New Zealand. The following information is mainly taken from it. Those who are interested in further information can log on www.assyrianchurch.com.au

projects Diocese Church initiatives History



St. Hurmizd Cathedral, Fairfield, Sydney

Melbourne Read about the parish of St. George and the other church initiatives in Victoria.

Auckland Find out about the parish of St. Mary's in the North of New Zealand.

Wellington Read about the Parish of St. Odisho in the capital of New Zealand.

Clergy Meet the Clergy of the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand.

Archdiocese Melbourne, Auckland, Wellingto Clergy Committees

Arch Diocese & Clergy

H. B. Metropolitan Mar Meelis Zaia

Rev. Ashur Lazar,
Chorepiscopa,
St. Hurmizd, Sydney,
Australia

Rev. Gewargis Atto
St. Mary, Sydney,
Australia

Rev. Genard Lazar,
St Peter & Paul
Sydney, Australia

Rev. Gewargis Toma
St. George,
Melbourne,
Australia

Rev. Toma Kanon,
St. Mary's Auckland &
St. Odisho, Wellington,
New Zealand

Rev. Shaju Poulose
St.Mary's,
Auckland

Barkho Barkho Michael Mirza Iemad Solaqa Issa Patrous Isaac Davi
Adnan DinkhaWilson KakoToma AdamSyrop Kanon Nicola Davi
Warda Adam Sargon Nissan Michael Rasho Emmanuel Kelaita Sargi
Hawil Edmond David Elias Novo Samir Nisan Mikhail Mikhail Shayn

McDonald Michael Odicho John Kushaba Robin Hermis Gewargis Akhajan Gabriel Odisho Emmanuel Yousif Ninos Elya Daniel Daniel Ahkigar Binyamin Ashor Jahimsha Antwan Mikhail Mishael Haroon Yacoub Odisho Jackson Solaqa Joseph Pero Sami Hurmizd Roney Israel Albert Isaac

Details of the parish priests in Sydney

Corbishop Ashur Lazar
St. Hurmizd's Cathedral Parish Priest
O (02) 9610 8680 **H** (02) 9610 2323
M 0416 116 516 **F** (02) 9823 0035

Rev. Gewargis Atto
St. Mary's Parish Priest
O (02) 9726 6309 **H** (02) 9822 1807 **M** 0417 230 658 **F** (02) 9723 6309

Rev. Genard Lazar
Ss. Peter & Paul Parish Priest
O (02) 9756 4624 **H** (02) 9756 4624 **M** 0404 984 153
Email revglazar@assyrianchurch.com.au

Rev. Younan David
St. George Parish Priest
O (02) 9756 4624 **H** (02) 9756 4624 **M** 0404 984 153

The Church in Melbourne is registered under the title of Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. The Diocese owns a church in the name of St. George, along with a resident utilised for the teaching of Christian faith and Assyrian language.

As the daily requirements of the church were on the increase, the Diocesan Bishop along with the Parish committee and faithful resolved in a General Body Meeting, the necessity for a larger church, hall and school. After many meetings and discussions, the Parish committee was able to purchase a block of vacant land (5 acres) for

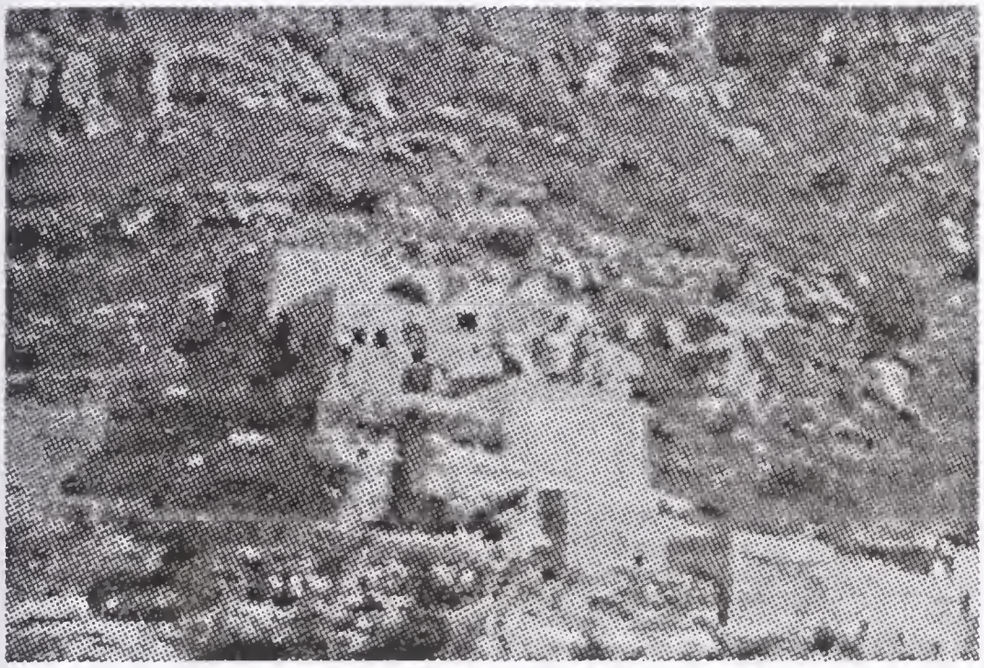
the price of A$280,000.00, fully paid within one and a half years. Due to a change of plans for the benefit of the Church, the five acres block of land were sold and in place, three reception halls were purchased to the value of A$1.8 million.

These three halls are currently being utilized as Church Hall and Reception Centre to be hired for private functions. In the future, it is anticipated that one of these halls will be reconstructed, and utilized for Church spiritual services. Although the parish is small in size, nevertheless, an amount of A$250,000.00 was pledged by faithful, at a meeting called by the Diocesan Bishop. The Church currently has an additional amount of A$320,000.00 in bank accounts and the Sydney Parish will also provide assistance. It may also be necessary for the Church to acquire a bank loan for the completion of this tremendous project.

Presently, all spiritual services are and will be conducted in St. George Church. Upon the repayment of the bank loan, construction will then commence on the new Church building which will have a capacity of 450 persons. The new school building will comprise 10 classrooms. The building of a new Church does not allow for the sale of the existing, as His Grace Mar Meelis Zaia, strongly emphasizes that the Church does not require to sell existing Church buildings in order to erect new ones. Both Churches will be utilized due to the increase in size of the community.

St. George parish in Melbourne has been the pride of parishes worldwide, with only a small number of memberships, these great steps and achievements were accomplished. Congratulations to the parish priest Rev. Fr. Gewargis Toma, Deacons and committee members, who have advanced with love for the success of their Church. Miss Marlin Haweil (Principal of St. George Assyrian School) has for many years devoted precious time and effort towards the enhancement of the school along with all the teachers. The building project team is striving endlessly to bring this enormous project to

end. The Church Choir group and Youth group and all Church faithful who are working relentlessly for the benefit of our Church and Nation in the state of Victoria, God Bless them all.



Youth Group

The future and hope of every Church and Nation is said to be it's Youth. This is a logically accepted and important concept for the survival of a nation.

The Church in Australia has continuously endeavoured to implement new strategies for the attraction of its youth, involving them in fields such as, religion, education and social activities. By this, our entire community has and will continue achieving successful results.

Mission Statement

Jesus calls us to follow, "Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest". Mathew 11:28.

The Assyrian Church Youth Group fosters the passion and dreams of Assyrian youth; linking our voices toward vital, empowered and supported ministry with youth at all level.

In pursuit of Youth Group vision we endeavor to provide leadership for the purpose of

*Connecting Assyrian Youth

* Supporting Assyrian Community

* Advocating for youth empowerment

* Encouraging discussion around ministry with youth

* Ensuring opportunities for youth participation in all level of our faith

Members of the Youth Group on Sunday evenings.

The following are some of the present and past activities/programs of the Church Youth Group.

* Assyrian Bible Study meetings every Sunday at 6.00 pm in St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School, located behind the Cathedral.

* Weekly radio program (Saturdays 3- 4 pm on 2GLF FM 89.3 - Listen live)

* Teaching Assyrian Language (Every Sunday starts at 5pm)

* Religious seminars (presented by His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia)

* Educational and Religious lectures

* Various sporting competitions such as table tennis & volley ball

* Fund raising (walkathon)

* Community support (Assyrian cemeteries clean-up day)

* Interstate & possible overseas trips (Melbourne Visit and New Zealand – Auckland)

* Picnics and parties

Central Committee with H.B Mar Meelis Zaia

The Youth Association of Sydney would like to take this opportunity to announce a new committee of 2009.

The current central committee comprises of eight members, who devote time and effort for the progress of this association. Through this site, you will witness a tremendous achievement attained by all those sons and daughters of the Church, who have participated with exertion towards the enhancement of this association.

The most encouraging and spiritual triumph of this association has been the preaching of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to its members. By the Holy power of the word of God, members' passion and esteem for their Church's faith and doctrine has increased enormously.

The new committee consists of eight (18) members:

Reni Misho. President

Ashurina Mishou. Vice President

Lina Dawood. Secretary

Sargon Mirza. Treasurer

Ashur Aprim. Activities member

Rana Yousif. Educational member

Ronny Pityou. Sports member

Ashur Khoshaba. Media

We pray to our Saviour Jesus Christ to continue His Grace in this committee to enable them to achieve the set goals and to continue building a future for our Assyrian Youth to praise His name.

The Church Youth Association has gained the respect of the entire Church sons and daughters, by their dedication and devotion towards various Church activities. We are also pleased to note that, today, youth participation within the Church has been affirmed by the Church faithful.

Undoubtedly, behind every accomplishment, there must be an accomplice for support and encouragement. This association has at all times, immense honour and respect for His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia, who has been, is and will always be an inspiration for the entire association. God bless you, Mar Meelis.

We hope you will find a place here that not only helps you move forward on your journey of Christianity & Assyrianism but also a place where you can relax every once in a while.

Senior Citizens

For the elderly members of the Church (55 years and over), the Church in Sydney has established an organisation to cater for the needs of the senior citizens of the community.This organisation conducts various activities such as excursions, tours, English and Assyrian classes, workshops, etc, spending quite joyous moments with members of their community. Additionally, it also gathers vital information from government organisations and conveys them to its members. Meetings are held twice a month on Wednesday 10:00 am to 12:00 noon in Edessa Hall. The current committee consists of three members, Mr Eyou Eyou (President), Mr. Hawil Syamando and Mr. Youarish Barkho.

Members of the senior citizens group.

Celebrating Father's day

Committee members with H.H Mar Dinkha IV, H.B Mar Narsia
Baz and H.G Mar Meelis Zaia.
Standing from L - R: Youarish Barkho, Eyou Eyou and Hav
Syamando.

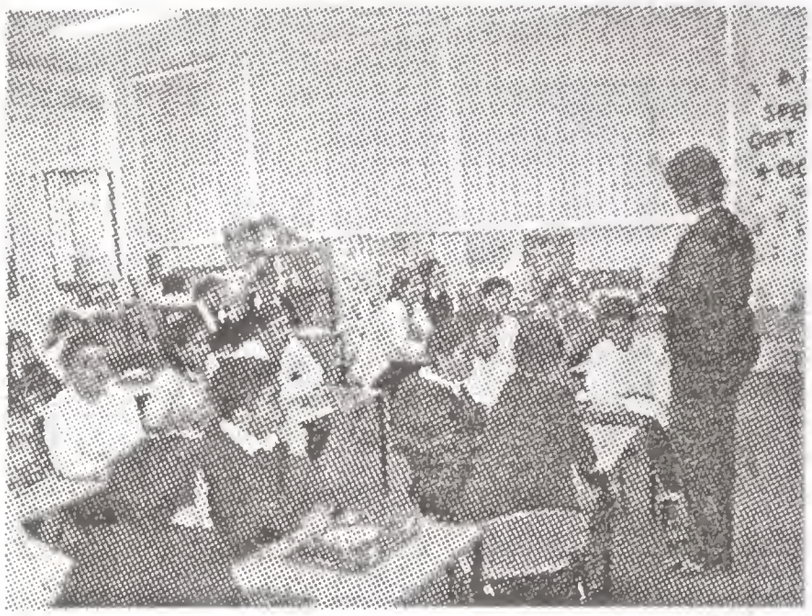
From L - R: Cnclr Albert Moshi, Mr. David Enwya (S.C membe

Cnclr Anwar Khoshaba (Fairfield City Mayor) and Mr. Eyou Ey
(S.C President) at Fairfield City Council Chambers.

Sydney Sunday school

The Assyrian Church of the East Sunday School in Sydney consi
of three teachers (who report to St Hurmizd Parish Priest). The
teachers take responsibility of up to 70 students every Sunday dur
church service. Students of this school are educated in the Assyr
language Christian faith, Spiritual hymns (according to the liturgy
the Church of the East), as well as other aspects of ethics are taug

accordingly. Praying, respect for parents, attending Church services and love for the Assyrian Nation and language, are other disciplinary guidance effectively bestowed. Previously, the Church was forced to take classrooms as rent from a local public school. However, at present, this school is conducted within the classrooms of St Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School. From there, students are escorted by their respective teachers, to the church for attending Holy Qurbana. The church fully supplies all the reading and writing materials required by the students, free of charge. One half of any excursion fees are also provided by the church. During these excursions, students visit such educational venues as museums and zoos. Upon the completion of the academic year and during the annual Christmas party organized by the teachers, the church presents each student with a Christmas gift. Funds for these activities are all derived from the yearly membership fee paid by the church faithful. The Diocesan Bishop has always stressed that, the church must try it's utmost to provide for the faithful, through services, activities and any other means beneficial to them.



Mrs. Suzy Georges and her advanced class.

Mrs. Alice Nissan telling a Bible story to her class

New Zealand

The Diocese of New Zealand consists of two parishes, Mar Odish in Wellington and St. Mary's in Auckland. The Priest for bot parishes is Rev. Fr. Toma Kanon, who resides in Auckland.

At present, these parishes do not have a building of their ow Nevertheless, all Church services are conducted for the faithful i

rented premises. After the completion of the services, the attendants gather socially in the Church hall.

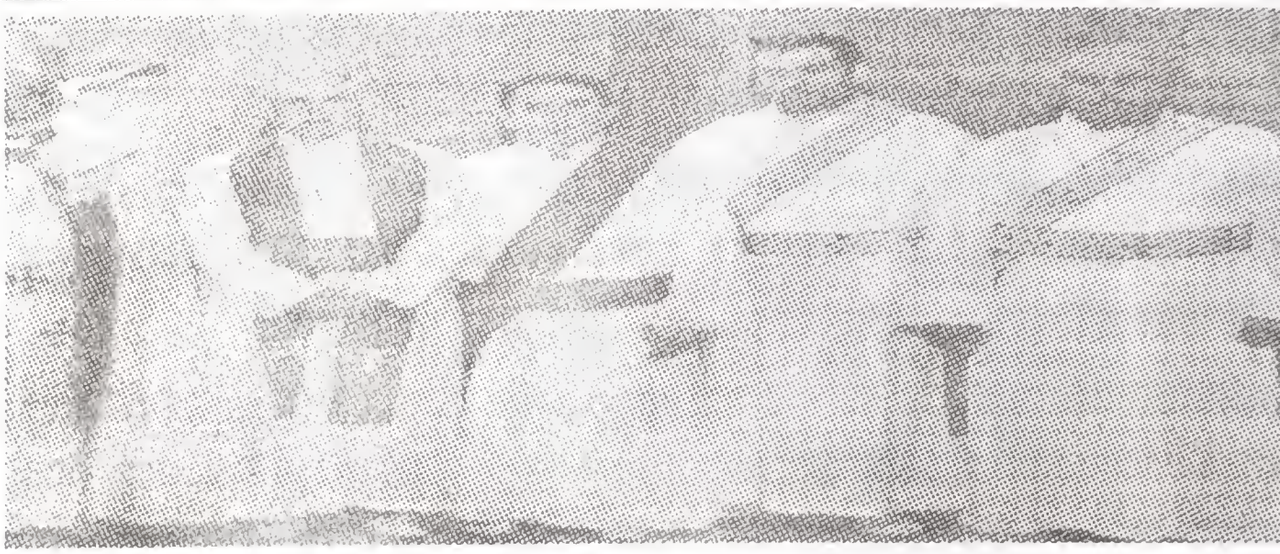
In Auckland, Rev. Toma Kanon is assisted by a Parish Council. A radio program is available containing information on Church news and other services, for the faithful.

Undoubtedly, we can witness that, by the Grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the endless efforts of the parish priest, deacons and faithful, our Church and community in NZ, are successful in preserving our faith, doctrine and language. God bless them all.

Patriarchal visit to New Zealand in 2002.

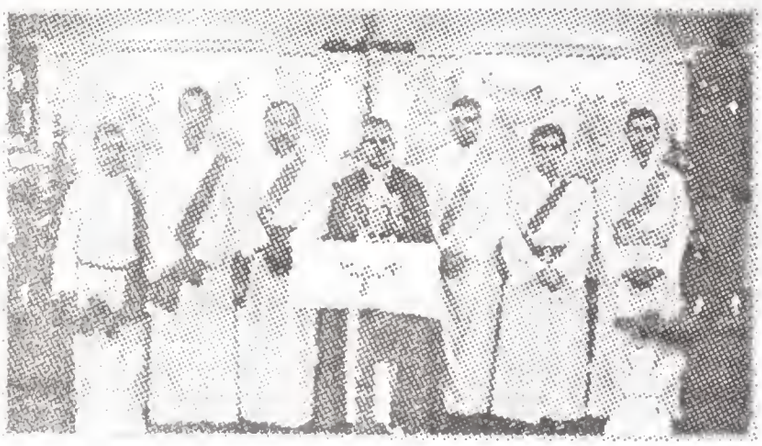
H.H Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch, with Priests, Deacons and Choir members, during the Patriarchal visit in 2002.

H.H Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch with the Church choir group.



(Except deacon Rofael Lajeen all are in this photo). Dea. Younan Kandal, D
Riyadh Dinkha, Dea. Sliwa Youndan, Rev. Shaju Paulose (India), M
Geevarghese, Rev. Toma Kanon, Dea. Shamoon Ibrahim, Dea. Albert Isa
and Dea. Ishaya, after the Holy Qurbana in Wellington parish in 2009.

Choir group at Wellington parish.



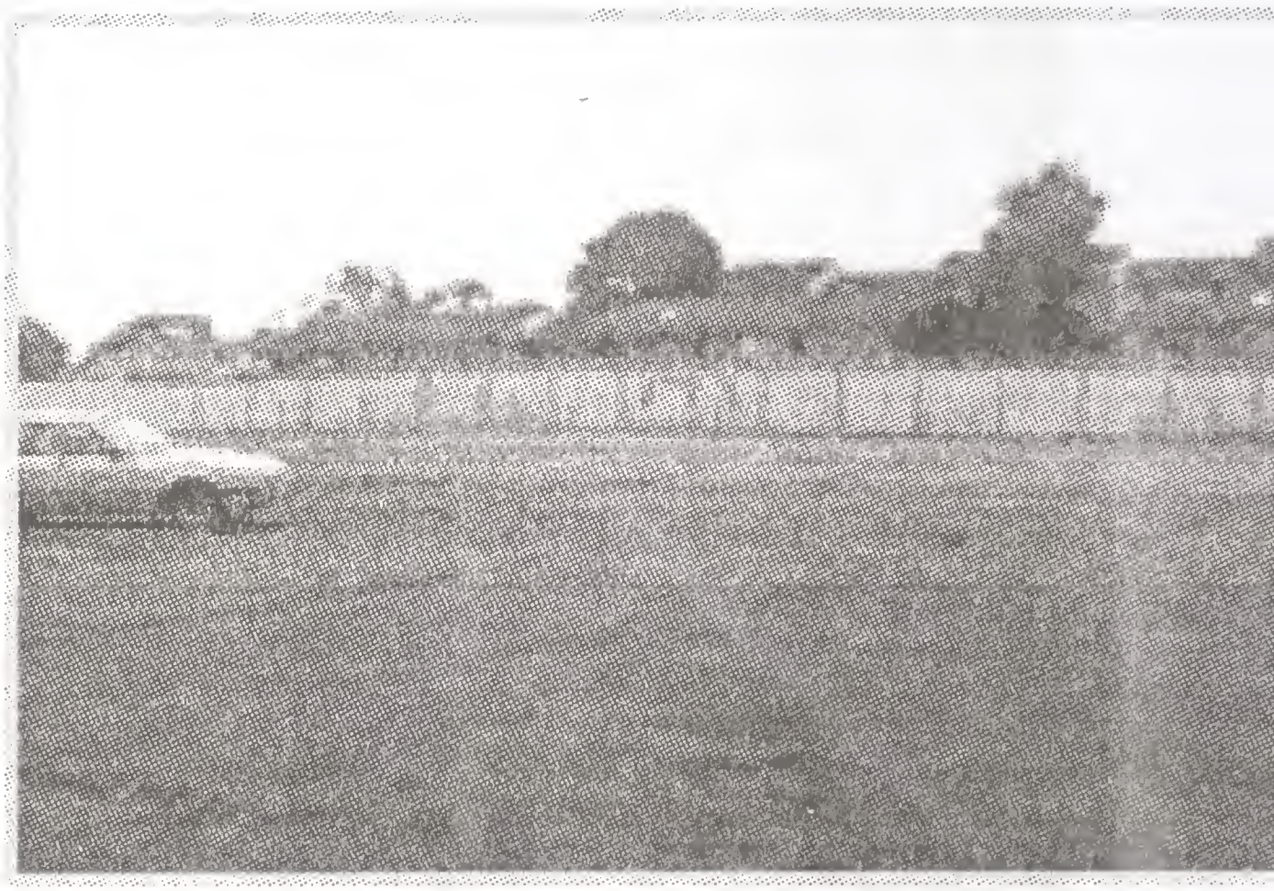
Rev. Toma Kanon and Deacons after the completion of Holy Mass

Choir group, during Sunday service

Faithful participating in a Christmas Midnight Mass in 2004

The Church in Wellington has established an organisation, known as the Assyrian Cultural House. In addition, a language school has been established to cater for the teaching of the Assyrian language. Music tutorials are also available for those faithful who are interested in learning various musical instruments. The Church is also contemplating the establishment of a computer class, as there are many computer literate members willing to provide this assistance free of charge.Undoubtedly, we can witness that, by the Grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the endless efforts of the parish priest, deacons and faithful. Our Church and community in New Zealand, are successful in preserving our faith, doctrine and language. God bless them all.

Assyrian Medical Centre



Another program, which the Assyrian Church of the East in Sydn is striving towards, is the establishment of a medical centre for c Church and community members in Sydney. Consisting of a lar number of Assyrian Physicians in all fields of medicine committed assist their community members, requiring medical assistance. T centre will be known as ASSYRIAN MEDICAL CENTRE. W the help of our Lord and community members, we are hopeful th one day, the Church in Australia will expand this centre to a w known Private Hospital in this country. We pray that the Lord ass our Church in Australia under the leadership of His Grace Mar Mee Zaia and all the faithful of our community, so that we may succe with this good and exalted aim for the advancement of our Chur and Community

Postscript

I had only 18 days in this trip to Australia. My longest stay in Australia was in my second trip in 1989. That was for 24 days. That was to Sydney only but I was able to also visit Canberra. As it is the federal capital, I was interested to have a look. It was a drive about three hours to Canberra from Sydney and back in the same day. Rev. Gewargis Toma was with me. He was with the old calendar at that time.

After making unity with the new calendar in India in November 1995 I was happy to hear that Rev. Gewargis Toma also sought unity with the new calendar.

Canberra, the capital and the largest inland city of Australia, is landlocked within the mountainous terrain of **south-eastern New South Wales** and located between Sydney and Melbourne. We visited the new Parliament House which was dedicated only a year earlier on 9 May 1988. There was a colourful religious ceremony for the opening of the new Parliament House. Roman Catholic Cardinal Clancy, Anglican Bishop Owen Dowling, Uniting Church of Australia's President Rev. Ian B.Tanner, as well as representatives of Jewish Religion, Islamic Councils, Sikh Religion, Buddhism, Aboriginals' representative and others were present. This shows the tolerance of Australia to many religions and ethnic groups in the world. Canberra was the city where the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held in 1991. Our Assyrian Church was represented in that WCC assembly. Our delegates from Iraq were an attraction in the assembly. Since President of Iraq Saddam Hussein annexed Kuwait to Iraq in August 1990, and American bombing in Baghdad in January 1991 the world began to watch what was going to happen to Iraq and the ancient Christians in Iraq who were there before Prophet Muhammad was born. It was my privilege to represent our Church in the last WCC Assembly held in Porto Allegro, Brazil in February 2006. That was the 9th assembly. The 8th assembly had met in Harrare,

Zimbwabe in 1998. The latest news on WCC is that it has decided in August 2009 that the next WCC assembly will be held in Busan, South Korea in 2013. That will be the 10th assembly of WCC.After the first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 and the second in Evanston near Chicago in 1954, the third assembly was in New Delhi in November 1961. The cause of the visit of His Holiness Mar Eshai Shimun, Catholicos Patriarch to India was the assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi.

Adelaide

Adelaide, named after the wife of King William IV, is the capital city of South Australia. and sitnated near the Adelaide Hills, I wanted to visit my Church History professor Dr. T. V. Philip teaching in Adelaide at that time in 1989. When I telephoned him he told me that he was not well on that day. So I decided to postpone that visit to a later date. Since then he passed away. So I never saw Adelaide.

Since I had a one- year visa with multiple entries to Australia, some of my friends were asking me that I should visit them before the visa period expires in November. Now there is problem of security check–up in airports, Even a respected person like Dr. Abdul Kalam, former President of India, was asked to take of his belt and remove his shoes for security purposes. An Indian officer will never think of it. But it happened with the Americans who are scared of Muslims as well as all men and women with brown skin.

Film star Sharuk Khan had to face same difficulty in America recently. Finally some important persons had to come to his rescue. Some north Indian actor cancelled his programme fearing harassment from the immigration officials.

I have faced it in some airports. Therefore traveling is not as enjoyable as it used to be. As it is for the safety of all passengers, I have no right to object to it.

Fifty Six Foreign Trips

1961 – 2008

1.	England, Geneva, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq	Oct 1961 to Sept 1962
2.	England, USA, Iraq	Aug 1966 to Oct 1968
3.	U.S.A., Canada, England, Germany & Iraq	April - June 1977
4.	Pattaya, Thailand	June 15 – 27 1980
5.	Germany (Gostar, Duisburg, Arenshorst, Berlin, Regensburg) & Amsterdam	Sept 7 – 19 1980
6.	Amsterdam	July 1983
7.	Germany (Freiburg) Stockholm, Switzerland (Zurich, Berne), England	1983
8.	Baghdad, Iraq	Feb 1984
9.	Sweden (Jonkoping), Belgium, Holland. England & U.S.A (Chicago, California, Missouri, Ohio)	Sept – Oct 1984
10.	Israel (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth) Italy (Rome)	May 1985
11.	Australia (Sydney, Melbourne)	Aug 1987
12.	England, U.S.A., Belgium (Louvain), Holland	July – Aug 1988
13.	Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra)	April 1989
14.	Iraq, Baghdad & Mosul	March 1980
15.	Geneva, Germany (Bowen, Munich, Oberau, Rome)	June 1990
16.	U.S.A., (San Diego, Hughson Chicago, Columbia Ann Arbor, Bowling Green) Canada, (Toronto, Mississauga, Hamilton)	May 9 – 30 1991
17.	U.S.A.,California, Chicago, Washington & New York	May 14-June 3, 1992
18.	England, Moscow	28 Aug-Sept 17, 1992
19.	U.S.A., (Los Angeles, Chicago, Modesto), Tokyo	Aug 1993
20.	Sri Lanka (Colombo and Kandy)	Oct 1993
21.	U.K., (Oxford, Rugby) Austria	May – June 1994
22.	Vienna	Feb 1995
23.	England, U.S.A. & Canada	June – July 1995
24.	U.S.A. (Washington, Chicago & Boston)	Aug 1995
25.	Israel & Egypt	Oct – Nov 1995
26.	Vienna, Denmark & Sweden	Feb – Mar 1996

27.	U.S.A. (California, Chicago)	May 9 June, 1996
28.	Syria (Aleppo, Hassake, Qamishly, Damascus	Oct 1996
29.	Vienna, England, Germany & Amsterdam	Feb – Mar 1997
30.	U.S.A., (Chicago, Iowa, Atlanta, California)	June – July 1997
31.	Lebanon & Iran	March 1998
32.	U.S.A., (New York, Chicago, Florida, California) England	Oct – Nov 1998
33.	U.S.A. (Chicago, Detroit, Iowa) Canada & Germany (Berlin, Wilterburg, Munich, Bohmte)	April – May 1999
34.	Italy (Rome, Venice, Ventimiglia), Germany (Frankfurt, Born, Munich)	1 – 22 Oct 1999
35.	Thailand (Bangkok)	25 – 31, Oct 1999
36.	Vienna, Italy, England	Feb – Mar 2000
37.	Australia, (Sydney & Melbourne) & N.Z	June – July 2000
38.	Amsterdam	July – Aug 2000
39.	U.S.A. (New York, New Jersey, Texas, Harvard, Italy	27 Sept – 15 Oct 2000
40.	Germany (Frankfurt, Munich, Halle)	Nov – Dec 2000
41.	U.S.A., (Chicago, Washington D.C., Florida, Texas & Indiana)	June 1-3 July 2001
42.	Vienna, Chicago, New York, New Jersey	Feb 25 – March 18, 2002
43.	Singapore, U.S.A., (Chicago Alabama, Austin, Dallas) Germany, Rome	Oct 14 – Nov 16, 2002
44.	Salzburg, Rugby, London, Munich	May 18 – June 15, 2003
45.	Germany, U.S.A. and Rome	Oct 2 – Nov 2, 2003
46.	Orlando, Chicago	May 4-17 2004
47.	Nine Cities in U.S.A. and Canada	2 July – 30 Aug 2004
48.	London, U.K	Nov 12 – 23 2004
49.	U.K. & U.A.E.	April 6 – 23 2005
50.	U.S.A.	Aug 16 – 26 2005
51.	U.A.E., U.S.A., & Qatar	16 Oct – 16 Nov 2005
52.	Brazil, U.S.A. & U.A.E.	12 Feb – 4 March 2006
53.	Germany, Italy, New Jersey, Los Angeles, San Diego, Detroit, Toronto	14 July - 22 August 2006
54.	UAE, Vienna, Moscow.	October 2006

55. UAE, USA(San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose, Arizona, Chicago, Dallas, New York), UAE, Iraq (Erbil, Duhok) — 7 Sept - 6 Nov. 2008
56. Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Perth) — 4- 23 Dec. 2008

The Airlines I travelled

1. Aeroflat
2. Air France
3. Air India
4. Alitalia
5. American Airlines
6. Austrian
7. British Airways
8. Danish
9. El Al (Israel)
10. Emirates
11. Gulf Air
12. Iraqi Airways
13. Japan Airlines
14. Korean Air
15. Kurdistan Airlines
16. Kuwait Airways
17. Lufthansa (Germany)
18. North West Airways
20. Qatar Airways
21. Qantas
22. Scandinavian
23. Singapore Airlines
24. Sree Lanka Airways
25. Swiss Air
26. Thai Airways
27. TWA

Domestic

1. Indian Airlines
2. Jet Airways
3. East West Airlines
4. Sahara
5. Paramount
6. NEPC Airlines

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan.

Mar Aprem (formerly George Davis Mooken) was born on 13 June 1940 at Thrissur, Kerala, India.

George was the 4th of the ten children of Devassy and Kochumariya of the Mooken family. He was active in the church since his Sund school days. There were no priests in the families of his parents. St he wanted to be a priest.

After studying at Bethel Nursery School in Mission Quarters he join the CMS Boys Parish School and moved to the Chaldean Syri School in 1949. After passing High School examination he join the St. Thomas College, Trichur in 1955. He was in the final batch the Intermediate Course of the Madras University in the St. Thom College.

In 1957 after passing his intermediate examination he joined t Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, in Madhya Pradesh. H excelled as debater and won Chief Minister Memorial Trophy of t state of Madhya Pradesh. When he was only 21 years ol immediately after four years of his B.D. course of the Serampo University at Jabalpur, he went to St. Boniface College, Warminst England on a scholarship of the World Council of Churches. Aft his one year of postgraduate studies in England at St. Bonifa

College, Warminster (4th year course of the King's College, London University) he had short courses at St. Augustine's College, Canterbury as well as the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland in 1962.

He holds two master's degrees in Church History, one from the United Theological College, Bangalore (**M.Th**. of Serampore, 1966), and the other from the Union Theological Seminary, New York (**S.T.M.** degree in 1967) He was a candidate for Doctor of Theology (**Th. D**.) degree at Princeton Theological Seminary, USA when he was made bishop and eight days later as Metropolitan at Baghdad, Iraq in September 1968. In 1976 he earned his **D.Th.** degree from Serampore University near Calcutta.

He was an active participant and supporter in most of the conferences and symposia held at SEERI (St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute) Kottayam. He has encouraged scholars abroad to co-operate with SEERI. He sent three students from his Church to study at SEERI for M.A. and two for Ph.D.degree courses and several others to do the certificate course. He has helped to project the ecumenical vision of the SEERI.

Mar Aprem has a collection of the rare Syriac Manuscripts in the Eastern Syriac. He took active part in encouraging ecumenical attempts for the preservation of these manuscripts in co-operation with SEERI. In 1995, Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam recognized SEERI as the Centre for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Syriac language and Literature.

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan registered for Ph.D. After 5 years of extensive research, traveling and reading in **Lambeth** Palace Library, London, British Library, London, Oriental Institute, Rome, and the Harvard University, USA he submitted his **Ph.D**. dissertation in October 2000. In May 2002 he successfully defended his thesis. In October 2002 the Syndicate of the Mahatma Gandhi University decided to award **Ph.D**. degree to Mar Aprem.

Mar Aprem was given the Medal of Merit of the Coptic Orthodox Cultural Centre, Venice for his cultural and ecumenical experience.

He was the recipient of the Literary Award of the Rotary Club o Thrissur in 1990. The first prize in the writing competition of the New Delhi based publishing House ISPCK went to him. They publishe that essay under the title **Adoption Abroad** (ISBN-81-7214-010- x) in 1991. He received **World Wide Award** of a local organizatio in Thrissur as well as the **William Carey Award** of the *Kraisthav Sahithya* Academy. He was awarded the **Mary Paul Chammana Award** by the Trichur Ecumenical Group for the best Ecumenica worker on 22nd December 2002.

He delivered the 10th **Annual Chaplaincy lecture** in th Loughborough University of thrology in England in May 1994. Th University published his lecture. He has lectured and preached i many places all over the world. He is at home in small groups o scholars or ordinary people as well as in large gatherings.

Ordained a deacon on June 25, 1961 he became a priest on the da he completed twenty-five years of age on 13 June 1965. He wa consecrated **Bishop** on September 21, 1968 by Mar Thoma Darm at Mar Zaia Cathedral in Karradat Mariam in Baghdad and promote as a **Metropolitan** eight days later in the same Cathedral.

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of the Chaldean Syrian Church of th East in India with headquarters Thrissur was awarded the "**MEN OF ACHIEVEMENT**" Award of the International Biographica Centre, Cambridge, England in 1984. This award is given to selecte men and women all over the world for their distinguishe achievements.

Mar Aprem has written 69 books mostly in English and a few i Malayalam such as biographies, autobiography, travelogue, churc history, etc. His books **Bishop's Jokes** and **Laugh With the Bisho** have already attracted world attention. He wrote five more books i the humor series. **Laugh to Health, Holy Humour, Joy to th World, Holy Smile** and **NOT SO FUNNY**. ORBIS books in New York reprinted his book **Nestorian Missions**.

His first two humor books were translated into Russian language and released in Moscow in 1992. Some of his jokes were translated into Malayalam and published by Deepika Books, Kottayam under the caption ***Vishudha Phalithangal. Vishudha*** means holy and ***Phalithangal*** means jokes. This book is out of print for many years. Doma Publications, Ernakulam brought out another book in 2002 captioned ***Aprem Phalithangal.***

His work on the biography of **Mar Abimalek Timotheus** Metropolitan was translated in to the Assyrian language and published in Chicago. His books, **Council of Ephesus of 431 AD** and the **Nestorian Fathers** were translated into Arabic language and published in Iraq and Chicago. His books **Sermons From the Gospels Vol.1** and **Vol. 2** were translated into Assyrian and published in Canada. His books too biography of his two predecessors, **Mar Abimalek Timotheus** and **Mar Thoma Darmo** were published in Thrissur in Malayalam translations.

The biographical details of Mar Aprem have been given in the **Men of Achievement**, Vol. 10, Cambridge, England in 1984. His biography appears in the **International Who's Who of Intellectuals, Vol. 6** Cambridge, 1985. The **International Directory of Distinguished Leadership,** First Edition, USA, 1986 also gives the biographical details of the Metropolitan. Similar details are found also in **Reference Asia Vol. 2** in 1986 and **Vol. 4** in 1989. **Biography International**, Delhi, 1993 also has details about him. The ***Akhila Vinjyana Kosham***, DC Books, Kottayam, 1989 and many reference books in Malayalam and English languages have published details about him

He is also a writer of devotional songs broadcast over **All India Radio**. His song **Behold the Cross of Calvary** was published in 50 Indian and 50 foreign translations. Mar Aprem who has spoken in various platforms throughout India and abroad is a linguist. An Audio CD of his 16 selected songs in Malayalam was released in 2008.

He founded The Mar Timotheus Birth Centenary Technical Trainin Centre in Trichur in 1980, which imparts free training in printin technology to students without any discrimination of caste or creed This is funded from the World Council of Churches, Geneva throug CASA, Delhi.

In June 1990 Dr. Mar Aprem read a paper in the one-man symposium organized by the **Pro Oriente,** Vienna. The title of hi paper was "**Was Nestorius a Nestorian?**" This was the first ste to form à Syriac commission by the Pro Oriente, Vienna. He ha been active in Pro Oriente since the Syriac Commission was forme in 1994. He has participated actively in its deliberations.

He was the co-Chairman of the ten-member Joint committee fo Theological Dialogue between Vatican and the Assyrian Church, whic meets once a year. This committee has made significant studies o the Liturgy of Mar Addai and Mar Mari as well as the Sacraments o the Assyrian Church of the East.

In 2008 he made two trips, the first was from Dubai to Duhok vi California, Chicago, New York, Erbil, The second was to Sydne Melbourne and Perth in Australia.

Since 1968 he is the head of the Church of the East in India with hi headquarters in Thrissur. He was the President of the **Church Histor Association of India** during 1976 – 1982. He is a member of th National Board of **CASA** (Church's Auxiliary for Social Action) sinc its founding in 1976 in New Delhi. He is active in several religiou and social organizations, all over India. This is the author's 69 book.

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To be published in 2010

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3. Syriac Manuscripts in India
4. Teach Yourself Aramaic Vol.II

Details of Photographs

1. Reception at the Sydney airport Ramsina Lee with her two daughters (Elizabeth and Rebecca), her sister Rowena Daniali with her daughters and their mother with flowers. Photo taken by Michael Lee.

2. Joffin Jose Kollalannur from Trichur, India after Holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church, Sydney on 14 December 2008.

3. After Holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church in Sydney on 14 December 2008. Priest (Fr. Gevarghese Atto) and deacons with the Choir members.

4. Dr. Kollannur Ittimani, wife Annees, son in law Jaison and his son Daniel in their home in Sydney.

5. Patriarchal Council in Sydney on 12 December 2008. Patriarch H.H.Mar Dinkha IV and four Metropolitans (Mar Narsai, Mar Aprem, Mar Gewargis Sliwa & Mar Meelis Zaia) along with Bishop Awa Rouel of California (Secretary General to the Holy Synod) and Archdeacon Yonan Yuvel Yonan of London, England.

6. Michael and Ramseena Lee is standing behind Mar Aprem. Ramsena's elder sister Rowena and their mother are seated on the either side of the Metropolitan with the daughters of Ramseena (Elizabeth and Rebecca) in their laps. Photo taken in Sydney on December 2008.

7. H.H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch with four Metropolitans and one episcopa in Sydney after laying the foundation stone for Sts. Peter & Paul Church

8. After Holy Qurbana in Melbourne on 21 December 2008

9. Mar Aprem celebrates Holy Qurbana in Melbourne.

10. Fr. Gewargis Toma and deacons assist Mar Aprem during Holy Qurbana on 21 December.

11. At Melbourne Jacob Haweil (second from the left). Soman Chakola and Sheela in the middle of the second row.

12. David Iyyunny Mulakan from Trichur with his wife Sicily and only son Vikas' wife Mini with his two sons Nitin and Nikhil. Mar Aprem is seated in the front. (Photo by Vikas).

13. Mar Aprem with his grand nephew Paul Gray in their home in Melbourne.

14. Mar Aprem's niece Mrs. Honey Gray with her son Paul along with Soman Chakola and his wife Sheela. Photo taken after dinner in Soman's house on 19th December.

15. Mar Aprem with his niece Mrs.Honey Gray (oldest of his 20 nieces and nephews) with her son Paul, aged 12 with whom he stayed for a day on Melbourne.

16. War Memorial in Perth, Australia, December 2008.

17. Engineer Kuruvilla Mathew with wife and children and grandchildren in Perth.

Cover 2

The consecration of Mar Meelis Zaia as Archbishop in Rabban Hurmizd Cathedral in Sydney on 7th December.
Left to Right: Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India, Mar Awa Rouvel, Bishop of California, Catholicos Patriarch H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon, Syria etc, Mar Meelis Zaia Metropolitan of Australia and New Zealand.

Cover 3

Some family members of Joseph Haweil (behind the Metropolitan) with his parents, grandma, aunt, uncle etc.

Cover 4

A view of city on 22 December 2008 in Perth, Australia.

Below. In front of the Anglican Church on 22 December 2008.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Reception at the Sydney airport. Ramseena Lee with her daughters (Elizabeth and Rebecca), Her sister Rowena Daniali with her daughters and their mother with flowers.
Photo taken by Michael Lee.

Joffy Jose from Trichur after Holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam church, Sydney on 14 December 2008.

After Holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church in Sydney on 14 December 2008. Priest (Fr. Gevarghese Atto) and deacons with the Choir members.

Dr. Kollannur Ittimani, wife Annees, son in law Jaison and his son Daniel in their home in Sydney

Patriarchal Council in Sydney on 12 December 2008

Michael and Ramsina Lee is standing behind Mar Aprem. Ramsina's elder sister and their mother are seated on the either side of the Metropolitan with the daughters of Ramsina (Elizabeth and Rebecca) in their laps. Photo taken in Sydney in December 2008

H.H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch with four Metropolitans and Episcopa in Sydney after laying the foundation stone for Sts. Peter & Paul Church.

After Holy Qurbana in Melbourne on 21 December 2008

Mar Aprem celebrates Holy Qurbana in Melbourne.

Fr. Gewargis Toma and deacons assist Mar Aprem during Holy Qurbana.

Jacob Haweil (second from the left) Soman Chakola and Sheela in the middle of the second row in Melbourne.

Sydney, Melbourne & Perth

At Perth, Australia. David Iyyunny Mulakan from Trichur with his wife Sicily and only son Vikas' wife Mini with his two sons Nitin and Nikhil.
Mar Aprem is seated in the front.
(Photo by Vikas)
22 December 2008

Mar Aprem with his grand nephew Paul Gray in their home in Melbourne

Mar Aprem's niece Mrs. Honey Gray with her son Paul along with Soman Chakola and his wife Sheela. Photo taken after dinner in Soman's home.

Mar Aprem with his niece Mrs. Honey Gray (oldest of his 20 nieces and nephews) with her son Paul, aged 12 with whom he stayed for a day in Melbourne.

War Memorial in Perth, Australia, December 2008

Mar Aprem with Engineer Kuruvilla Mathew with his wife, children and grandchildren in Perth.

Some family members of Joseph Haweil (behind the Metropolitan) with his parents, grandma, aunt, uncle etc.

On 22 December 2008 Mar Aprem outside the Anglican Church, at the garden of remembrance which is a substitute to the cemetery. It is he the urn of the ashes of the members of the church are buried after crematio

Near a beautiful view of Perth on 22 December 2008. Photo by Iyunny. in Perth, Australia.

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